

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY
G. ARTHUR PEARSON

(OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 531.

FOR WEEK ENDING MARCH 4TH, 1899.

[ONE PENNY.]

A Public Boon:

It is to the critical and discerning ability of the public that Guy's Tonic owes its present proud position. The remedy has been weighed in the balance and found to possess exceptional merit, and to give exceptional value. That is why the number of fluid ounces of Guy's Tonic sold in the shops to-day is five times as great as it was ten months ago. Nothing but strong public approval could account for this marked access of trade.

As a Remedy for Digestive Disturbance, depressing pains and oppression after eating, and for preventing food becoming like a weight at the pit of the Stomach, Guy's Tonic is invaluable. People who take it after meals digest their food thoroughly and completely, so that the Body is far better nourished in every way, and there is an entire absence of those unpleasant Symptoms which make food and eating a bugbear to so many.

Congratulations:

E. P. LUBBOCK, Esq., of
8 Carlisle Terrace,
Gravesend, writes:

"I am pleased to learn
of the reduction in the
price of Guy's Tonic. I
hold a very high opinion
of your medicine."

Mrs. M. A. JACKSON writes
from 3 Castle Villas,
Lenton Boulevard, Not-
tingham:

"I am pleased to see the
price of Guy's Tonic is
reduced. I have found
great benefit from it for
Liver trouble and In-
digestion."

A new size (Six Ounce) Bottle of Guy's Tonic, price 1s. 1½d., is now on Sale at all Chemists and Stores.

ALFOSCOTM REGD. *Allen Foster & Co.* SOLE MAKERS OF THE 'ALFOSCO' COSTUMES

Buy Direct by Parcels Post from the Leading Firm of London Manufacturers.

Design
No. 105.

10/6



A Special Line
in Ladies'
Serge Costume
Skirts, Black
and Navy,
lined through-
out, cut full.
Price only 3/11
each; post-
age, 5d.

Design
No. 110.

10/6



Design No. 105. 10/6.

Made in the world-renowned Spécialité Serge, or in the excellent Venetian Cloth, all colours: Black, Navy, Brown, Fawn, Grey, Blue-Grey, Electric, Myrtle, Reseda, Purple, &c. The bodice is shaped to the figure and very prettily designed. It has a pleated front, and trimmed with a frill of cloth carried over the shoulders, and large fancy buttons. The bodice and sleeves are lined. The Skirt is cut full and fashionably. Costume complete. 10/6. Carriage paid, 6d. extra. Skirt alone, 5/6. Carriage paid 5d. extra.

Patterns & Sketches Post Free.

Regular Stock Sizes are 34, 36, and 38 in. round bust (under arms), the Skirts being 38, 40, and 42 in. in front. Larger or Special Sizes made to measure, 18 extra.

Design No. 110. 10/6.

Is Allen Foster and Co.'s famous Reefer Costume. Thousands of Testimonials speak in most flattering terms of this Coat and Skirt Costume. The Coat is cut in the latest approved style. It has a velvet collar and small fancy buttons. The skirt is cut full and fashionably. Made in the smooth-faced Venetian Cloth or Spécialité Serge. Price 10/6 complete, in either cloth. Carriage, 6d. extra. Colours: Black, Navy, Grey, Fawn, Brown, Myrtle, Bronze-Green, Purple, Electric, &c.

Patterns & Sketches Post Free.

Regular Stock Sizes are 34, 36, and 38 in. round bust (under arms), the Skirts being 38, 40, and 42 in. in front. Larger or Special Sizes made to measure, 18 extra.

Patterns and New Illus. and Sketch Book of Fashions for the Spring Season POST FREE on application.

ALLEN FOSTER & CO.,

The London Manufacturers,

17 ROSCOE STREET (GOLDEN LANE), LONDON, E.C.

COFFEE WITHOUT DREGS.

GOOD! IT'S MASON'S

MASON'S ESSENCE OF COFFEE AND CHICORY



EXPELS THE OLD METHOD

Manufacturers—

NEWBALL & MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

An agreeable, stimulating and sustaining beverage. Instantly prepared and most economical. Equal to the very finest coffee. Highly recommended by the Medical Profession.

Of all Grocers and Stores, or a Sample Bottle post free for 9 stamps.

ALSO TRY
**MASON'S
WINE
ESSENCES**

AND
**MASON'S
EXTRACT OF
HERBS.**

Sample Bottle of either sent free for 9d.; two assorted 1/3; three assorted 1/8.

Agents Wanted.

ROYAL MAGAZINE

Now
On Sale,
3d.

PASTIMES

A Weekly
Magazine of
Sport and
Adventure.

PUBLISHED
EVERY WEDNESDAY

ONE PENNY.

ZOX

CURES

NEURALGIA

Toothache, Headache, Sciatica,
and all Nerve Pains.

PURE, HARMLESS, AND NON-APERIENT.
Do not be persuaded to take a substitute, there is nothing as good as ZOX.

Of all Chemists, 1s. and 2s. 6d. per Box.

ZOX Co., 11 HATTON GARDEN, E.C.



£4 15/- Few Lady's and Gents' shop soiled, last Season's Pneumatics from best English makers. With 12 months' guarantee. Lists free.

Easy payments arranged. Lists free.
F. G. POTTER, Wholesale Cycle Factor, Norwich.

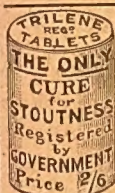
FOREIGN STAMP COLLECTORS' CHANGE A WONDERFUL OFFER.

GRATIS and POST FREE upon receipt of FOURPENCE to cover cost of packing postage, etc., the following to every applicant:

100 Assorted Foreign Stamps. 25 British Colonials.
1 Album. Packet of Unused Stamps. Packet of Mounts.
Packet American Stamps. Packet South African Stamps.
Packet Japanese Stamps.

Prices List Free. Approval Sheets. Good Discount.

Universal Stationery Company, TENBY
Pembrokeshire.



ALL FAT PEOPLE

Readily Reduce Weight and Cure
Corpulency Permanently by taking
TRILENE TABLETS (Regd.) for
a few weeks. They are very agreeable,
harmless, and never fail to PRESERVE
both HEALTH and FIGURE without
change of diet. Reduction begins
immediately.

An English Countess writes: "You
Trilene Tablets act admirably."

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

MISS HEYWOOD, 77 Hindhill Street,
Heywood, Lancs., says: "I am 21lb.

lighter, and my rheumatism also seems cured."

MRS. WEAVER, of Greenpits Villa, Station Road, Ross,
Hereford, says: "Am reduced from 134lb. 8lb. to 112lb."

MR. CANTHAM, 57 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets
cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned."

LADY CONSTANCE CONRAD writes from Wiesbaden: "I
am very pleased with the Tablets."

PRINCESS LICHTENSTEIN writes from Landsberg,
Austria: "Pray send your excellent Tablets directly."

COUNTESS G. FURSTENBERG, Stammheim, Germany,
writes: "They act speedily and well."

MR. BUTLER, Surgeon, Hampton Manor, Evesham,
says: "My patient lost more than a stone."

Send 2/6 to **THE TRILENE ASSOCIATION,**
66 Finsbury Pavement, London, E.C.

£20

Hairdressers fitted
up. Estimates free.

PALATABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR COD LIVER OIL.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM.

(Really Genuine.) In Patent Air-tight Tins. 1lb., 10d.;
1lb., 1/4; 1lb., 2/4; including Tin and Postage.

MRS. CONYERS, MORCHARD BISHOP, DEVON.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied
troubles, or Varicose Veins, should send for
treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms,
Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment
without surgical operation or the use of cum-
bersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be
sent sealed, post free.

S. S. MURRAY

7 Southampton Row, London, W.C.

Tobaccoists Commencing. See
Ill. Guide (259 pages) 3d. How
to open a cigar store, 250 to 25,000
Tobaccoists Outfitting
Co., 185, Euston Road, London.
The largest and original house (50
years reputation. Mgr., H. Myers

FOR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

JUNO CYCLES



ARE THE
VERY BEST
AND MOST
UP-TO-DATE.

Carriage Paid.
Cash Discount.

Write for New
Season's List.

JUNO Cycles
and Accessories
sent Post Free.

LISTS POST FREE

Road Racer, £10; 16s. 8d. Monthly.

Monthly

£10 ... 16/8 ... £12 ... 20/- ... £14 14s. ... 24/6

£10 10s. ... 17/6 ... £12 12s. ... 21/- ... £15 15s. ... 26/3

METROPOLITAN MACHINISTS' CO. Ltd.

June Cycle School, 75, 76, Bishopsgate Street Without,
E.C., and Beccadilly Circus, London, W.

Typewriters, 29 9s. 15s. 9d. Monthly.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

INVESTED FUNDS

£10,000,000.

The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, post free.
FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, Manager.



A LADY writes of the
NEW AUTOMATIC KNITTER:

"I earn my living entirely by the machine."

A FATHER writes: "My little girl, nine
years of age, earns as much
as five shillings some days."

Knits Socks (a pair in 35 minutes) and Stockings,
Underclothing, Fancy Goods, &c.

Easily learned. Lessons free.

Cash, Hire, and Work Terms from

Sorres, Dept., 67 Southwark Street, London, S.E.

or 58 Union Street, Glasgow.

15,000 Stitches a Minute.

You will be pleased with CHANCELLOR SOAPS.

That's why we want YOU to try them. As First Prize we offer
a £300 HOUSE, and hundreds of other prizes. By using Chan-
cellor Soaps and saving your wrappers till June you get the best
and cheapest Soaps extant, you may get the House or a 50 guinea
Piano, you will probably get a splendid Lady's Silver Watch, or if
not you must get a money Prize.

Every Competitor gets one.

GET A BAR TO-DAY!

Won't You?

Send

4d.

for

Sample

Bar

GIVEN AWAY

HUNDREDS OF POUNDS

IN PRIZES - EVERY

COMPETITOR

GETS ONE

OR

CHANCELLOR SOAPS

CHANCELLOR SOAPS

A £300 HOUSE

LIBERAL

PAYMENT

FOR WRAPPERS.

PARTICULARS WITH

EACH 2½ AND 3½ BAR.

CHANCELLOR SOAPS

to 13

Clerken-

well

Road,

London.



No. 531.]

[ONE PENNY.]

For the Week ending March 4th, 1899.

A CARLIST MISSION.

"It is useless to attempt to persuade me further, dear Mercedes. Not even for your sweet sake can I consent to give up this mission, dangerous as I know it must be. The very danger is an inducement; the greater the danger, the more proud shall I be that I have been entrusted with the mission. I long now to do something for him who is the rightful King of Spain."

"You have served Alfonso in Cuba; why should you now fight against him in Spain?"

"I served Spain in Cuba, not this King Alfonso. Don Carlos is the rightful King of Spain, and although his fortunes are low, and his case now almost hopeless, I will not hesitate to do what I can for him. As soon as I could leave Cuba after the proclamation of Alfonso, I did so. Then this wretched fever overtook me. Now that I am well again I must act."

Pedro Alzola drew himself up and looked proudly at the girl in front of him. He had raised his voice as he had spoken the last words, and Mercedes stepped forward and laid her hand warningly upon his arm.

"Speak not so loudly, Pedro," she said hastily. "You know that in this house all are adherents of Alfonso. When do you start on your mission? Oh, that I could dissuade you from your purpose!"

Her eyes were fixed appealingly upon his, and for just a second the young man's resolution seemed to waver; but the weakness was quickly over, and he spoke again.

"Let us not talk further on my errand. I start this afternoon. Was it only for this that you urged me to come here this morning?"

"I wished to save you if I could, Pedro," replied Mercedes, clasping her hands. There was a pause for a few seconds and then she continued:

"You start this afternoon; will you tell me your destination, and how you intend to reach it, so that I may know where you are as the hours go by, and pray for your safety?"

"That is a secret which I ought to tell no one, least

of all to one who is so connected with friends of Alfonso," he returned with a slight smile. "Nay, Mercedes," he added as he saw a slight flush pass over her beautiful face, "that was but a jest. I know right well that my secret will be safe in your keeping: I am going to Saragossa and I shall travel part of the way by train and walk or ride, according to circumstances, to the village of Vejos, where I shall put up for the night at the 'Black Bull' Inn. I shall be disguised as a peasant," he continued, growing enthusiastic again, "and after I leave the inn to-morrow morning—if I cannot get one before that—I have the name of a trusty man who will give me a mule to enable me to finish my journey. But it all depends upon what happens," he concluded hastily, as though sorry that he had said so much.

"Heaven grant that you may escape all dangers!" exclaimed Mercedes, "but this, I fear will be our last meeting. My father will never consent to my marriage with one who has espoused the cause of the Pretender; so that, even though you come safely through the conflict, which, alas! may not be, we shall be parted for ever. But, tell me, have you the letter upon you now?"

She spoke in a low tone, and bent forward somewhat eagerly.

"Yes," he answered after a moment's hesitation. "I have it here. It was entrusted to me only this morning, and I shall not let it pass from my keeping until I deliver it to the person for whom it is intended."

"I should like to look at it," said Mercedes, with a pleading glance. "To me, it is like a dread document that means unhappiness for us both—I had almost said, our death warrant, Pedro."

"Dear Mercedes, do not regard it in so gloomy a light," said Pedro, tenderly. "I am a soldier and a son of a soldier, and you also are of a soldier's family. I am doing nothing more than a soldier would do. I thought you were more brave; something has unnerved you."

"Yes, Pedro. But I will not distress you further with my gloomy thoughts. Still, I would like to look at the cover of that packet—to just hold the message that means so much for you and me. I cannot tell you why this is; a woman's whim or curiosity, call it what you like, but it has a strange fascination for me and I ask you to grant this last request."

Pedro was moved by the tenderness in her voice, mingled as it was with something that seemed to express hopelessness and loss. Glancing cautiously about him, Pedro unbuttoned his coat and from an inner pocket slowly drew forth a square packet wrapped in silk. For a moment he held it and then handed it to her.

"And this is the missive that carries so much with it!" said Mercedes pensively, gazing at the thin packet which she held.

She looked at it thoughtfully for several moments, until Pedro began to fear that her gloomy thoughts would overcome her and cause her to weep. He stretched out his hand as if to take it from her when she started back with an exclamation of fright.

"Hark!" she exclaimed. "Here comes my father. He must not see this or you are lost!" And she hastily hid the important packet in the bosom of her dress.

Alzola stepped forward as if to take it, but Mercedes had already darted to the door in her anxiety to prevent the entrance of the newcomer. She opened the door and stepped into the corridor. Pedro listened for voices, and from where he stood at the other end of the long room he heard confused tones. The next minute Mercedes returned with a light step to her lover.

"It was only a servant, after all," she said in answer to his inquiring look. "Oh, Pedro, take this dreadful document,"—drawing it forth and handing it to him—"and hide it away quickly. I began to fear that my curiosity would bring about your ruin. Hide it away quickly, I cannot bear to look at it again!"

She thrust it hurriedly into his hand, and half helped him to place it in his pocket. She was trembling so violently that when he had once more safely hidden the object of his mission he took her in his arms and tried by loving words and caresses to still her agitation.

"But I must now be going, Mercedes," said Pedro, when the girl's agitation had ceased, "I have stayed too long. I have still some preparation to make for my journey."

Mercedes did not attempt to detain him, and after a tender leave-taking, with many injunctions to be cautious on the part of Mercedes, the lovers separated.

It was about half-an-hour after the departure of Pedro that Mercedes Chabran rang the bell and told her maid that she wished to see Carlos.

This man was a young Irishman who had been brought to Spain when a mere boy, and had at this period been in the service of the Chabrans for ten years. In speech and appearance he was quite Spanish, although occasionally there was a twinkle in his eyes which is far more commonly seen in a native of Ireland than in a Spaniard. His real name was Charles Regan, which the Spaniards had turned into Carlos Regano.

"Carlos," said the young woman when the servant entered, "I understand that my father has given you leave of absence."

"Yes, Miss," returned Carlos.

"I want you, Carlos, to devote some part of that time to undertaking an errand for me. Can you do that?"

The Irishman looked somewhat puzzled.

"Will you tell what you want, miss?" he returned, avoiding a direct answer to her question.

"You know my relative, Pedro Alzola? I think you have seen him. I want you to carry a note to him. He is travelling to—"

She stopped abruptly, and looked fixedly at Carlos; then she continued in fairly good English, but with a decided accent:

"Charles, you have been a faithful servant, and I am sure I can trust you."

"You can that same, Miss," replied the Irishman emphatically dropping into a way of speaking which he had never shaken off, despite his many years residence in a foreign country. "It is a pleasure to do anything for ye, Miss Mercedes."

"Señor Alzola has been here this morning to say goodbye to me and I fear that I have depressed him with gloomy forebodings. I have written a letter to him which I wish you to convey, as it may serve to comfort him on his journey. I know that he will stay this night at the 'Black Bull' Inn, at Vejos. He will be disguised as a peasant. I wish you to give him this letter of consolation some time to-morrow morning after he has left the inn. You are discreet, and know how to hold your tongue. Can you do this for me?"

"I can, and I will!" returned the Irishman, in a tone that left no doubt that he would accomplish the task. "And I am pleased to have the chance of repaying you for the kindness you have shown me. An Irishman may be hot tempered, but his heart is in the right place, and he doesn't forget those who've been good to him. Give me the letter miss, and Mr. Pedro shall have it to-morrow morning if I am alive."

"Or he is," breathed Mercedes. "Charles, if you meet him before he reaches the inn to-night and—and—he is in trouble, will you help him?"

"Trust me for that, miss!" answered the Irishman in a decided tone. "Have you anything more to say?"

"No; I think you understand me," returned Mercedes with a meaning glance. The young Irishman returned the glance, bowed and withdrew.

When he reached the corridor he stood still for a moment and passed his hand through his hair, while a puzzled and yet amused expression passed over his countenance.

"This beats me," he muttered. "She couldn't know the reason why the old gentleman has given me a holiday. She has given me the very information I wanted, to help me to do what the old gentleman wants, and yet I know she expects me to help Mr. Alzola to do what her father doesn't want him to do. It's rather mixed up, but that's what it amounts to. So to please one I've got to take something away from Alzola and kill him if necessary, and to please the other I have got to watch over him and hand him a letter to comfort him when he is in the thick of his trouble."

"I can't see through it properly, but women are strange creatures. I don't know that I am particularly fond of Mr. Alzola; he wasn't very nice to me before he went to Cuba and I haven't forgotten it ayther. The old gentleman has promised me a big sum if I do it, and the young lady hasn't promised me—. Get out wid ye! Ye ought to be ashamed of yourself, Charles! She's pretty, and an Irishman should be ready to go through fire and water for a pretty face!" And he went off to his own room.

It was getting dusk that evening when a peasant, mounted on a mule, and ambling along the road towards Vejos, suddenly pulled up. The cause of the sudden

stop was a sound of hoofs rapidly approaching from the direction whence the peasant himself had come.

"He seems to be in haste," muttered the peasant, "and I prefer that he should pass me."

He got off the mule and pretended to be busy examining the mule's fore legs. A minute later he was joined by a man on horseback.

"Can you tell me if I am far from the 'Black Bull'?" inquired the new arrival, who was fairly well dressed and apparently of the well-to-do middle class: "why can't people leave off fighting, so that a man can travel by train instead of jolting over these rough roads? I expect that my horse will be lame by the time I reach the inn."

"You have about a mile farther to go," replied Alzola, imitating the rough talk of the peasants. "You have lost your way, or you would not be on this out-of-the-way path."

"One might lose anything here," returned the stranger, "as well as one's way. Are you going towards the inn? Yes? Then we'll go together, for I don't like these parts. It will do my horse good to take it easy, so your mount will be able to keep up with mine."

Alzola was rather disconcerted, but after a moment's reflection he decided to agree. It might be safer for him, after all. He therefore nodded assent, mounted his mule, and the two men continued the journey side by side.

There was very little conversation between them until they reached the inn. Alzola thought it prudent not to say much lest he betrayed his superior social standing; moreover, as his companion was above his own assumed rank, it was not becoming in him to carry on a conversation. The man on horseback, who said that his name was Lopez, addressed him occasionally and made various remarks on different subjects, but on the whole very little was said.

Arriving at the inn, Lopez insisted that the peasant should come into the best room with him. There was not much accommodation at the little place and the best room was but a poor affair. Alzola tried to decline the honour, but the other took him by the arm and drew him into the room.

"The landlord will see that our animals are attended to," he said, "so just sit down there and make yourself comfortable. We'll have some wine and some supper, for I think you said you were going to stay the night?"

Alzola had said nothing of the kind, but he judged it prudent not to contradict. He was naturally suspicious of everybody, but there seemed no reason to fear that his new companion had any sinister designs against him. If he were suspected by the Royalists they would simply surround him and take his document from him by force; they would not trouble to set a man to ferret out his secret, or to get the document away from him by cunning. Still, he must be cautious.

The wine and some fruit were brought and both men did justice to it. Alzola relaxed a little under the influence of the wine, while Lopez paid no heed to the apparent difference in the social scale. Before they had been seated a half-an-hour Alzola had ceased his imitation of his peasant speech and the two men were chatting amicably together.

"That's a good ruse of yours," said Lopez, "to disguise yourself as a peasant. I wish I had done the same. A man's life isn't safe about here, I should say, if the people think that he's got a little money about him."

Alzola started, but Lopez only laughed. "Oh, don't be afraid," he returned in answer to the quick glance which Pedro shot at him. "I'm in disguise too, for that matter. I think it is lucky that we have met, for I imagine that we are on much about the same errand. Well! well!" he added as the other pushed back his chair. "I don't wish to know your business, but there is no reason why we shouldn't spend the evening agreeably together. We need not be afraid of each other."

He filled the glasses again, disregarding the fact that Alzola had half risen from his seat. "Here's good luck to both of us!" he said raising his glass.

Alzola, his suspicion allayed by the easy manner of Lopez, and anxious to repair so far as possible the blunder he had committed in betraying himself, sat down again, drew his chair closer to the table and knocked his glass against the other's.

"As you say, here's luck to both of us!" he said with



"Mark," she exclaimed. "Here comes my father."



[Pedro Alzola . . . stooped and picked them up.]

assumed heartiness. "If I choose to travel as a peasant why not?"

"Exactly!" replied Lopez. "And now, if you have finished, let us pass the time by throwing the dice. We need not play for money, but just for amusement. To show money here might be dangerous."

There was a box of dice on the shelf and the two began to play. After they had been thus engaged for about five minutes, Lopez, in making his throw, ejected the dice too roughly and the little cubes rolled over the table and fell to the floor by Alzola's side.

Lopez uttered an apology and rose for the purpose of finding the dice, but with true politeness Alzola bade him sit still and, shifting his chair, stooped and picked them up.

"Come, you're not drinking!" exclaimed Lopez after the next throw.

"I never drink much," returned Alzola as he rattled the dice in the box.

"Nonsense!" was the rejoinder. "This wine would not hurt a baby. It's fairly good for the place. Come, drink up your glass, man!"

Pedro sipped at the wine and made his throw.

"Two fives," said Lopez, yawning. "This is rather a slow game, and I am getting sleepy." He lay back in his chair and yawned again.

"I, too, feel tired," said Pedro, drowsily leaning back. "I think we had better retire."

"Stay a little longer, and smoke another cigarette," said Lopez. "These are good, try one,"—pushing the box of cigarettes across the table.

Alzola made no movement. He saw the box, but his eyes were heavy. He gazed sleepily at the box of cigarettes, then his eyes closed, and his head dropped on his breast.

When he awoke with a start his first action was to raise his hand to his breast, and a feeling of relief passed over him when his hand touched the place where the packet had been deposited. His companion was still sitting opposite him smoking his cigarette.

"I thought you wouldn't sleep long," remarked Lopez "so I stayed here to keep you company."

"Have I been asleep long?" asked Pedro, vaguely.

"Not really asleep, only dozing," replied Lopez. "The least thing would have aroused you, as that gust of wind did just now when it shook the window. We had better get to bed."

The landlord appeared in response to his call, and said that the two beds were ready. They were both in one room, as he had no other room to spare. This was perplexing to Alzola and he was about to protest that he was not fit company for Lopez—he intended to make other excuses when the landlord was gone—when all three were surprised by the door being flung back violently to admit an officer and half-a-dozen soldiers.

"Seize the peasant!" shouted the officer, and the six men made a rush at Alzola.

All was confusion. The landlord ran back, scared almost out of his wits, and Pedro, guessing that any attempt at concealment would be useless, endeavoured to gain the wall in order to prevent an attack from behind while he defended himself to the last. But, before he could carry out his purpose and grasp the revolver hidden under his coat, the soldiers were upon him, and, struggle as he might, he was unable to free himself. In the greatest of mental agony he had to submit to his clothes being torn open and the precious packet, with its silken covering dragged from its place of concealment and handed to the officer.

The officer tore off the covering and opened the packet. He stared at it for a brief space, then looked wonderingly from the document to Pedro.

"What is the meaning of this?" he asked. "There's nothing in it; the paper is blank!"

If he expected Pedro to tell him all about it he was doubly mistaken. The young fellow was just as much surprised as the officer, but his surprise was not manifested, because his face was distorted with rage. On hearing the officer's words he just had sense enough left to keep silence and await developments.

"We have seized the wrong man, after all!" exclaimed the officer in a tone of vexation. "Where's the other fellow? Seize him!"

But the "other fellow" was nowhere to be seen; he had apparently taken advantage of the confusion to effect his escape. The officer satisfied himself that Pedro had no incriminating document upon him, took away his revolver and told him that he might go where he liked—only that was not exactly what he said. They then all hurried out after the missing Lopez.

Nearly out of his mind with rage, mortification and perplexity, Pedro staggered about the room blindly in his attempts to find the door; but, stumbling over a chair that had been thrown down in the scuffle he fell to the ground, striking his head heavily against the hard floor. There he lay unconscious for more than an hour, when, someone carried him off to a rude bed on the floor above.

The next morning Pedro awoke with a splitting headache and to the memory of the failure of his mission, and the mystery of the document entrusted to him. He was not long in arriving at the conclusion that Lopez had made an exchange while he had been asleep in his chair, but the reason was not clear.

What was to be done? It was useless to go forward, and equally so, he had no doubt, to set out in search of his companion of the previous evening. And how could

he go back to Barcelona and confess that he had failed! He descended the rickety stairs and found his way to the stable; the mule was there, but the horse ridden by Lopez was gone.

The landlord met him and pressed him to have breakfast, but the young fellow declined and pulled out his purse to pay for his lodgings. The landlord, however, refused to accept anything, saying that his companion, who had left much earlier, had paid for all.

When Pedro found himself once more on the road it was with no proper idea as to where he was going. But the incidents of his journey were not yet over. He had not proceeded far from the inn, when he was hailed by a young man whom he saw striding across a field.

Pedro went on without heeding; he had had enough of casual acquaintances. But the man sprang lightly into the road and stopped the mule.

"I have something for you, Señor Alzola," he cried, "something that you will be pleased to receive." And with these words he handed to Pedro a somewhat bulky letter.

"How did you know my name?" asked Pedro, mechanically taking the letter.

"You do not recognise me," was the reply, "I am Carlos Regano and am in the service of Señor Chabran, and that letter was given to me for you by the señorita."

Alzola was almost beyond the capability of feeling surprise. He urged his mule forward a few paces and then tore open the letter. On a sheet of paper was written these words:

"Forgive me! I did this to save you. This will be delivered to you when all danger is, I hope, past. You now can fulfil your mission."

Pedro, scarcely able to believe his eyes, looked from the letter to the other enclosure, in which he recognised the missing packet. His brain was in a whirl; he could only return to Carlos and in broken tones ask him to convey his thanks to the señorita.

Then the two men separated, Carlos to return to Barcelona, and Pedro to continue his journey.

On the following day Carlos returned somewhat unexpectedly as the other servants thought. Señor Chabran was not in, so he reported first to Mercedes.

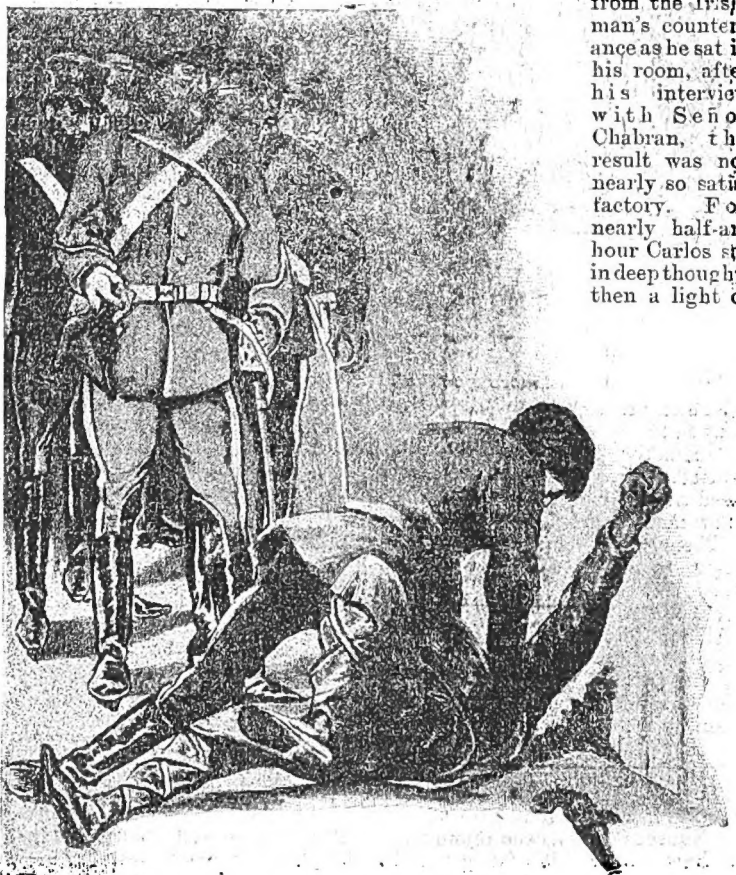
"And you delivered my letter of consolation to him quite safely?" she inquired anxiously. "And—was he in any trouble?"

"There was a little trouble at the inn, miss," replied the Irishman, "but he was really in no danger. I watched the scuffle from the door and would have helped him if necessary; but they only found on him some blank papers."

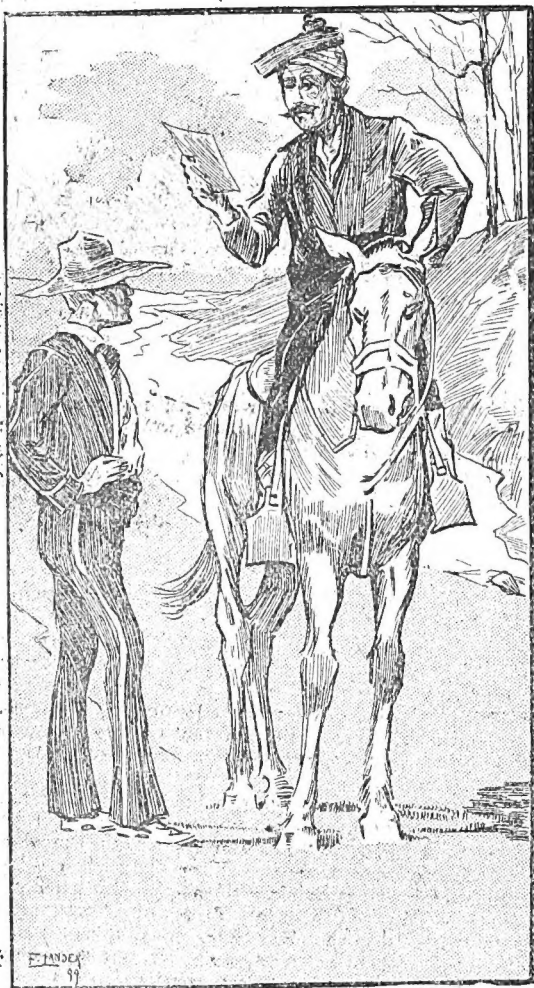
"What! that all?" asked Mercedes; and after thanking the Irishman and rewarding him in a way that made his eyes sparkle, she dismissed him.

"That's a good stroke of business," mused Carlos; as he left the room. "And I expect the old gentleman will get just as handsomely when I hand him this packet."

But to judge from the Irishman's countenance as he sat in his room, after his interview with Señor Chabran, the result was not nearly so satisfactory. For nearly half-an-hour Carlos sat in deep thought; then a light of



Struggle as he might he was unable to free himself.



Alzola tore open the letter.

intelligence took the place of the vacant stare in his eyes and he slapped his knee vigorously.

"I can see through it all!" he said softly, "and she's as clever as—well never mind who. I'll warrant this is how she did it!

"She heard that he was going away, and she heard from her father that the Royalists had got scent of the fact that a Carlist messenger was to leave Barcelona with important information. So she put two and two together. Of course, she wanted to save him, and help him, and she didn't want to betray her father's plans.

"So she asked him to come here that morning and she had a bogus packet ready. Somehow she managed to change 'em. I shouldn't be surprised if she did it under his very eyes without his knowing it. A man is blind when he is in love, and the woman can do anything, and he wouldn't know a word about it.

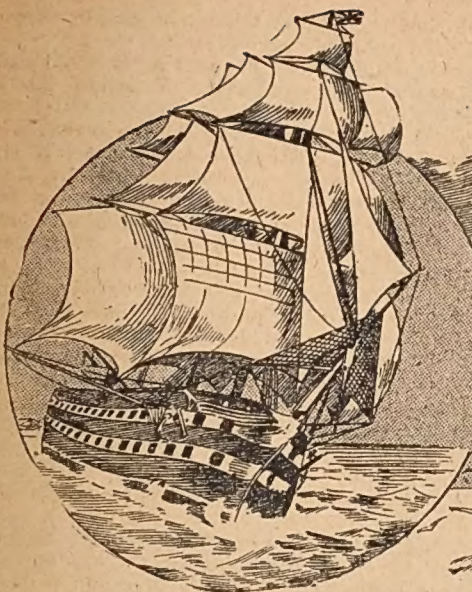
"Well, he went off and thought he had got the packet safe; then she sent for me and gave me that very same packet to hand over to him when she thought the trouble would be over. And sure enough I did it! And I went to all that trouble—I made friends with him, dropped something into his wine while he was hunting for the dice, exchanged the letters during the five minutes he was asleep, giving him another bogus one in return for what I thought was the true document; and then I handed to him the real thing which I had been carrying about with me, and came back to Barcelona as pleased as Punch because I'd done a service to two people with one stroke as I thought. And that girl outwitted the lot of us.

"Of course, the old gentleman won't want her to marry Alzola, but she will. When the Carlist business is settled she will coax her father to get a pardon for him and he will give them a father's blessing like a lamb. A girl that can play a trick like that can do anything."

It is sufficient here to say that the Irishman's explanation was correct except in one particular, and that his conclusions concerning what would happen in the future proved equally accurate. He was wrong simply concerning the exact way in which Mercedes had effected the exchange, but on this point the reader will require no enlightenment.

GEORGE DAY.





A DIPLOMATIC DIFFICULTY.

SEÑOR ANTONIO SMITH, Spanish Consular Agent at Hookport, U.S.A., found himself in a singular diplomatic position. He had just been notified by his Consul General that, relations with the United States being terminated, he was to turn over the archives to the care of the local Consular Agent of France, close his office, and depart.

This may not appear difficult, in view of the fact that Hookport was but a small place of two or three thousand inhabitants, so much fallen away from its earlier brisk trade with the West Indies that neither the Spanish nor French agent receives a call for official services half a dozen times in a year. So that for the little town one man, and he Anthony Smith, sufficed for both of the foreign consulates. His fellow-townsmen had also obtained for him the position of postmaster. He was also, incidentally, town clerk of a notary public.

This composite responsibility was taken seriously by Señor Antonio, M. Antoine, or plain Anthony Smith. Having much imagination, and quiet and limited surroundings, he magnified his offices; like a chameleon, he took colour from the circumstances of the moment, however often and suddenly they might change.

Smith was really an Englishman, who had spent years in business in Cuba and Martinique, and had been drafted to Hookport, where he had settled down.

In a room adjoining the post office stood two roll-top desks, precisely alike, occupying the two front windows. Above one of these desks was draped the flag of Spain; the tricolor of France overhung the other. The archives were few, but arranged with an eye to effect, and tied with many yards of red tape; the consular seals also were in evidence. In the windows respectively appeared the printed signs:—

CONSULAR AGENCY OF SPAIN,
ANTONIO SMITH.

and

CONSULAR AGENCY OF FRANCE,
ANTOINE SMITH.

And the same men who were hail-fellows-well-met with Tony Smith in the post office were gravely courteous

with Señor Antonio, or politely festive to Monsieur Antoine at their Consulates.

At 10.45 on an April morning, the postmaster of Hookport, having opened the mail-bag, perceived among its contents a large official envelope bearing the seal of the Spanish Consul General and addressed to Señor Antonio Smith. Recent developments in regard to the political situation had prepared him for an international crisis.

He turned red, then pale; but he placed the packet in its appropriate box, and went on distributing the letters and handing out newspapers to the applicants outside the delivery window. When the rush was over, and only a few straggling individuals came in to inquire for letters, Mr. Smith called Foote, his assistant, and himself passed into the office of the consulates.

Thence, a moment later, he came out, and, presenting himself at a small window, asked cautiously:

"Señor Assistant Postmaster, is there anything for the consular agency of Spain?"

"Yes, señor," and Johnny Foote proffered the official document, which Señor Antonio took with a lofty expression of thanks.

Johnny Foote it may briefly be said, was a freckled towheaded youth, who adored his employer as the triple extract of all that there is of heroic and romantic, a bigger man than any to be found in history or in penny novels. It is true that the elaborate international parts which the official felt himself obliged to play seemed, to Johnny a game. But it was a good game, indeed, Johnny judged; and in his awkward way the boy imitated and seconded his chief as best he could.

Señor Antonio carried away the document, retired to the desk of the Spanish consulate, opened the envelope, and read his instructions with an air of ever-increasing gloom. Then he shouted, "Ola Juan!"

The useful Johnny instantly appeared.

"Yes, señor."

"As clerk of the consulate agency of Spain you are now to learn that diplomatic relations between our government and that of the United States are terminated."

"The paper said so this morning," interrupted Johnny Foote.

"We have not known it officially until this moment," corrected Antonio, and Johnny stood rebuked.

"In accordance with instructions from my Consul General," continued Antonio, "I am about to confide the archives to my honourable colleague the Consular Agent of France, Juan. It is your duty to carry them to him, and to safeguard them, if need be, with your life."

With this, Señor Antonio piled up the packets of papers upon the willing arms of his assistant, crowning the heap with the metal stamp of the consulate. Johnny set out with a measured step towards the other side of the room.

It had been the intention of M. Antoine to be seated at his desk, ready to receive the messenger whose errand his diplomatic sense must have foreseen. But, unluckily Señor Antonio in throwing away some useless papers let fall into the Spanish waste basket a pair of scissors which, before relations with the United States had become strained, he had borrowed from the post-office. In search for the scissors two or three minutes were lost so that when M. Antoine entered the office of the French consulate the messenger was awaiting him.

"Good-morning, Señor Juan," said the official, with a fine unconcernedness of any crisis in affairs.

The messenger, who did not know what he ought to say, answered simply:

"Good morning, monsieur," and deposited the archives upon the desk of the friendly power.

M. Antoine viewed the papers with an air of sudden concern.

"Does this mean, Señor Juan, that Spain has severed her relations with the United States?"

"I should say so, monsieur," responded Johnny Foote.

The French Consular Agent wrote a receipt for the archives, rose to his feet and, handing the paper to the Spanish messenger, sprang his hands eloquently above the paper of his new trust. "I beg you, Señor Juan, to convey this receipt to Don Antonio, assuring him that Spanish honour is safe with France, whose humble representative I have the happiness to be, and also present to him my personal condolences, with the assurances of my highest esteem."

This time, on his way between the two consular agencies, Johnny Foote delayed to exchange signals with a friend under a back window who wanted him to come out later to join in some sports. So that when he reached the Spanish desk Señor Antonio was sitting there in an attitude of noble grief, with an effect of having remained immovable for several hours.

Johnny delivered the receipt, and stated that "M. Antoine is going to pitch into anybody that tries to lay a hand on the Spanish things; and he is awfully sorry for you, señor, and thinks just as much of you as though you were not down on your luck. And so do I, by Jingo!" added the boy loyally.

Don Antonio silently arose from his chair; then, mounting it, he took down the Spanish flag, which he carefully folded and laid upon the desk; then, having removed the sign from the window, he placed it with the flag. He closed and locked the desk. His career as a Spanish diplomat was at an end.

He crossed the room and set to work to find places for archives intrusted to the guardianship of France. Johnny Foote, emboldened by the more cheerful looks of his superior, came to the side of the desk and stood

figdgeting from one leg to the other. M. Antoine smiled at him.

"My good Jean (for Johnny was now attached to the French consulate), what can I do for you?"

"If you don't want me, monsieur, I should like to go out a little while with the boys."

"Ah!" murmured M. Antoine. "Without doubt. Go, my brave boy!"

On the square-hewed timber near the edge of the wharf sat a row of ancient mariners, talking as they had talked for the last twenty years. They were thoroughly acquainted with one another's ideas, but certain subjects seemed to be made to be rolled over and over again in their mouths along with their tobacco. When other topics failed the peculiarities of Tony Smith were a continual resource, and just now the political crisis, instead of overshadowing his personality, seemed to bring it more strongly to light.

"I expect," observed one of the elders, "that there ain't nobody in this country as much interested in the war as Tony Smith is."

"Well, you know, there's three of him, to view it from all sides," said another.

"Queer acting ain't he? Wasn't no mental afflictions in his family, was there?" ventured a stranger, a skipper, in for repairs to his schooner. He was promptly disciplined.

"No, sir," responded the captain, who had spoken first. "Good blood on both sides of the house. Anthony Smith is a likely young man excellent in every respect. Anything you observe that looks singular in him is due to his stay in the West Injys. Manners and customs is different there from ours, of course, and Tony stayed long enough to soak 'em into his natur'."

The other old men nodded their adhesion to this diagnosis.

At that moment somebody saw a vessel rounding the point. By well-known features of its rigging it was made out to be the *Miranda*, Captain Soper of Hookport, master and owner, on its return from Matanzas, where it had gone four months earlier with a load of timber and salted fish. Its Captain, when on shore, was one of the chorus of elders who sat on the wharf to prophesy, and he had been much missed. His wife had accompanied him on the voyage, and her return with an assorted cargo of news was eagerly awaited by the ladies of the place.

A topic of conversation was not easily let drop by the sages. "First man that Captain Soper will want to see is Tony Smith," remarked one.

Nobody doubted it. Then the chorus took to professional appreciations of the course of the schooner.

The old Captains stood in a line on the wharf to welcome their crony and his wife. But everybody was surprised to see a third person with the excellent couple, a walking bundle of wraps that still was recognisable as a young girl. From under a "pumpkin hood" and above a worsted muffler gleamed a pair of magnificent Southern eyes. A Cuban girl!

"Our young friend, Miss Manuelita Garcia of Matanzas," Mrs. Soper told the captains.

The stay-at-home mariners now enjoyed the glory of informing Captain Soper that while he was on the sea, war had been practically declared.

"It's a mercy that we hadn't been overhauled for a prize, and I feel thankful," declared the good man. "Now, I must see the Spanish Consul at once," he continued, "for I've got a letter for him from an old friend in Matanzas."

By this time the boys had left off playing and come down to the wharf. Johnny Foote, as ex-clerk of the consular agency of Spain, spoke to Captain Soper:

"Spanish Consul's gone away, sir. But he has left his papers with the French Consul, and you can see him. He is there. And the postmaster, too, sir," Johnny added, as an afterthought.

"Eh?" said Captain Soper, for the moment puzzled.

"Tony Smith is there all right," explained one of the mariners.

"Oh yes, yes, of course. My dear, you see about getting the things on to some kind of a lighter and steer for your sister Byram's. I will run on ahead to see Tony, and you can overhaul me at the post-office."

The postmaster sat on the steps of the office alone and in deep thought; when he saw someone coming near, he threw a small object neatly behind some stones—perhaps forgetting who he was just then. Mr. Smith had been wooing peace of mind with one of the cigarettes of the departed Señor Antonio. He arose quickly.

"Glad to see you, Captain Soper. Welcome home again, sir!" he hailed, heartily.

But over the fine first careless rapture of the meeting was cast a shade of melancholy when the captain without ceremony, handed a letter to the postmaster, who at once saw the handwriting of a Cuban friend.

"From your old master, Don Serafino Garcia," said the Captain, cheerfully. "Good many years since he saw you, but he remembers you well, Tony. His wife has been dead for some time, and he was terrible put out to know what to do with his little girl. You remember Manuelita, I daresay. She must have been a mite of a little tot, at the time that you were there in Matanzas. She ain't but sixteen now. Well, m'wife just took to that sweet, pretty creature, and we've brought her home with us to stay for a time, at any rate till the troubles in Cuba are over.

"The way Señor Garcia talked about you! Tony, I thought he desired that you might take it into your head to marry her. Well, this letter will speak for him and I must go along now, for here are my women folks."

They made a picture as the ox cart came up the street, the two women seated among a heap of sea chests bundles, and a queer, foreign-looking small black trunk. The boys had resolved themselves into a guard of honour. Johnny Foote bore the oxgoad, and gee'd in a friendly fashion at the big, lumbering animals.

"Heave to, there!" shouted Captain Soper, and the team was halted.

"Here's Tony Smith, my dear," said the Captain. "Miss Garcia, Mr. Smith."

One blue mitten, so spacious that it had an appearance of emptiness, was pulled off by some force concealed in its mate, and a slender, little, creamy hand was timidly extended towards Tony. As he took her slight fingers she lifted her black-fringed eyelids, and shot a soft, brilliant glance straight into his eyes, and down into the heart of Anthony Smith, of M. Antoine, even as far as the heart of Señor Antonio, late consular agent of Spain. That glance was a formidable projectile.

The ox team started again on its way, Captain Soper walking behind.

"You be sure and come up to see us this evening, Tony," Mrs. Soper called out to him.

"Thank you, ma'am; I will with pleasure if I can. But this is my busy day," he replied, vaguely.

He watched the group until it turned the corner towards the Byram house. Then he thought of Don Serafino Garcia's letter, and went into the post-office to read it.

But it was addressed to Señor Antonio Smith, consular agent of Spain.

The postmaster sighed. "Not for me," he judged. Then he had the right idea. "That letter must be consigned to the French consular agent."

He looked round for a messenger, but Johnny by this time was probably helping to unlade the ox team, so that Mr. Smith was obliged to carry the letter in person.

He laid it upon the desk of the French consulate; then seated himself and opened the envelope. Don Serafino Garcia wrote thus:

"My very dear and esteemed friend Smith."

"That's me—any one of me" noted M. Antoine with satisfaction. "I am committing no indiscretion. The letter is not of a personal nature."

But as he continued to read the loyal diplomat, he began to have his scruples. After some generalities concerning the state of the island and of business he saw these phrases, with increasing alarm:

"To you, most excellent friend, I wish to recommend my only daughter, Manuelita, the eye of my soul. To a father he it permitted that he speak plainly—if your heart, dear Don Antonio—"

Clap went the palm of M. Antoine over the ensuing words, that he might not behold them.

"This is too personal by half," he declared. "I have no right to learn the private affairs of my Spanish ex-colleague. That, indeed, would be indiscreet!" and he gave a very Gallic laugh and shrug.

But Postmaster Anthony Smith had heard what Captain Soper had said about Don Serafino Garcia's hopes, and M. Antoine had not been able to ignore the overtures to Señor Antonio.

There could be no doubt, the question must be settled then and there whether Mrs. Soper's invitation be accepted or not. Because it was certain that a few more glances from those glorious eyes of Manuelita would conquer the whole triple alliance of Smith. M. Antoine sat immersed in thought; finally he came to a diplomatic conclusion to this effect:

"Señor Antonio, Consulate Agent of Spain, has departed; officially he no longer exists; he is defunct. His affairs are, by instructions from his government, committed to the care of the French Consulate. Now in this time of crisis could a Spanish official wed a Cuban woman? That is the ultimatum in the case of Don Antonio. While I—M. Antoine, French Consulate Agent, am bound by international honour to remain strictly neutral, a state of mind quite incompatible with the lively affections which should be the basis of marriage.

"So I am out of it, too. But my opinion in this critical case would be that the postmaster, Mr. Anthony Smith, may, individually and officially, with great propriety, contract a matrimonial alliance with the daughter of Don Serafino Garcia of Matanzas, his old friend and employer."

Outside the consular window could be seen the boys returning from escort duty. Mr. Smith ran to the door of the post-office.

"Johnny!" he called to his factotum, "you run back and tell Mrs. Soper that I shall have the pleasure of calling on the ladies this evening."

ELIZABETH PULLEN.

OUR HARDY ANNUAL.

WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO WITH 100,000 CHILDREN THIS SUMMER.

TRADITION says that a drowning man sinks for the third time, and then finally disappears. The FRESH AIR FUND has "gone under" seven years in succession, and now for the eighth time it makes its appearance as fresh as ever, and sets forth its usual appeal for assistance, not on behalf of itself, but for the benefit of the poorest children in London and our other large towns. Since the first appeal was made, no fewer than half a million children have been given a day's outing in the country through this agency.

There are, no doubt, a great many new readers of *Short Stories* since the objects of the Fund were last published. For their enlightenment let me say that each child gets a day in the country, with plenty of good food and drink, at a cost of ninepence, and this sum includes the amount spent on the railway fare.

The arrangements for the outings are made by the Secretary of the RAGGED SCHOOL UNION, which society shares all the working expenses with the proprietors of *Pearson's Weekly*; that is to say, the Fund is not burdened in any way by having any expenses deducted from the amount subscribed. Every penny received is spent on the children, and I believe I am correct in stating this to be the only charitable institution in existence which is run on such lines.

Each year is worked separately from its predecessor or successor, the accounts being made up every September. Thus we get our "hardy annual."

It is hoped it will be possible this year to give a holiday to 100,000 children, and arrangements have been made for that number, provided, of course, sufficient money comes to hand. This means that £4,050 must come from somewhere. One half of the amount has been guaranteed to the gentlemen who have undertaken the work of carrying out the excursions in the different centres, and if the donations fall short of £2,025, the deficit must be made good by the proprietors of *Pearson's Weekly*. Such a calamity, however, is not anticipated. We start the season with nearly £300 which has come to hand during the winter.

But the desired end will not be reached without a lot of hard work, and appeals will be inserted from now until the end of September, asking for subscriptions. You, on your part, must worry your friends, and if you succeed in gaining their interest in the movement, go a step further and request them to mention the matter to their friends and acquaintances.

The list of towns and the number of children to whom it is hoped to give a treat in each is as follows:

Aberdeen, 2,000; Birmingham, 5,000; Belfast, 3,000; Blackburn, 2,000; Bristol, 2,000; Bradford, 2,000;

Bolton, 2,000; Cardiff, 2,000; Dublin, 2,000; Edinburgh, 2,000; Glasgow, 5,000; Gateshead, 2,000; Hull, 2,000; Leeds, 2,500; Leicester, 2,000; Liverpool, 5,000; London, 40,000; Manchester, 5,000; Nottingham, 2,000; Newcastle, 2,000; Oldham, 2,000; Portsmouth, 2,000; Sheffield, 2,500; Sunderland, 2,000; total, 100,000.

Each place, of course, is worked according to local peculiarities. In some it has been found possible to carry out the excursions in co-operation with an existing organisation, while in others a special committee has been formed. The name and address of the correspondent or secretary in each case will be published next week. To print a full list of the committees would occupy too much space, and probably would not interest anyone outside the particular town for which they are responsible. If any person is so interested in the scheme as to wish to be in possession of all the names, no doubt the secretary will oblige him, on receiving a request to that effect.

The places to which the provincial children will be taken will be left to the local committees to decide. But so far as London children are concerned, they will go to Epping Forest, as in other years.

It has often occurred to me that people do not actually realise the position of the children of the very poor of our big cities. If they did, I firmly believe the whole of the £4,050 would reach these offices during the first week, instead of it being necessary to keep pegging away for subscriptions.

It seems scarcely credible that with all the existing organisations of one kind and another, there are still so many children who have never tasted the happiness of a day in the country.

Now supposing there are only one thousand children in London this summer who are in such a plight. A cheque for £40 10s. will make them all happy. Who will be the first to send that amount?

We do our best to pick out those who deserve a holiday—not those who have earned one by attending a Sunday or any other school, but children who, through no fault of their own, are too poor to get a little pleasure and fresh air. The question of religion does not enter into the matter. Let a child be poor and in want of a holiday, and the FRESH AIR FUND steps in.

Having set the ball rolling once more, it is for our readers to assist us as best they can. Collecting sheets will be supplied to anyone sufficiently interested to ask for one. The offer of a gold-plated pencil-case, or one of *Pearson's Weekly* penknives to those who collect £1 or over, still holds good.

Amounts received will be acknowledged in *Pearson's Weekly* from week to week.



- MICKEY'S PIG. -

TOM CONNOR was the blacksmith over the hill. Mickey Finn was in the habit of running on errands for Tom, and so, when Providence sent a litter of pigs into Tom's sty, he picked out the smallest, most measly-looking pig in the litter, and gave it to Mickey.

Of course the boy was delighted, and he ran home with the squealing little porker under his arm.

Now, if there was anything of which Mrs. Finn was fond it was fresh pork, especially when it was young and tender. But she had had considerable experience with animated pork in her day, and after looking at Mickey's acquisition with the eye of a connoisseur, she decided that the chances of the pig's ripening into plump hams and juicy chops were very slim.

"Now, Mickey, you take that rack o' bones wid no mate on it back to Tom Connor, an' tell him he might be up t' better business nor shovin' off his bones an' bristles on ye. Faix, he might as well be givin' ye a shtove grats. Luk at th' tail iv th' boneen! Musha, there's no more twist to it than to a hoe handle!"

"But, mother, I don't want th' pig t' ate. I want to play wid him!"

"Play wid a pig, is it! Nixt ye'll want to be playin' wid Feeman's calf, so ye will. Oh, but you're a looney b'y; ye're out iv yer sivin small sinses. Play wid a pig! Mebbe ye'd be puttin' pants on him an' feedin' him wid a spoon, agra. It's a quare lad ye are, me b'y, wid yer ould divil goats an' that black crow as has shiny beads in his head. Well, well, an' I waitin' t' make a ly'er iv ye 'stead iv a dirty snake charmer or mautherin' vagabones as ye will be av ye don't shtop playin' wid animals! So, thare. Now, Mickey, take that pig back t' Tom Connor an' tell him t' give ye wan wid pork on his ribs an' fateworth pickhn' on him. Nowrun, runawa!"

Mickey picked up the pig tenderly in his arms and went away over the hill. His heart was heavy; but Tom Connor cheered him up.

"Mickey," said he, "you an' I'll make a pen for the porker forenist th' forge, an' you can gather a little grass an' shtuff fer him. Mebbe he'll get fat. Thin ye mother'll be glad t' hav' him. We'll call the porker Darby."

The pen was built and Darby was duly installed therein. Under the fostering care of the blacksmith, and little Mike, the porker grew in size and plumpness, and endeared himself to Mickey by his many winning ways. The pig became broad of back and strong of limb. Darby's ears began to droop upon his neck, and he was very fond of being scratched between them with a piece of old iron. And so the days fled quickly by, filled with the joy of content.

But while the May days were slipping away into the eternities, Mrs. Finn had not been idle. Her boy's extravagant praises of Darby had awakened her cupidity anew.

Often while Mickey was at school, Mrs. Finn took sly trips over the meadows to the sty. On each of these occasions she always took with her some choice morsels which were calculated to increase Darby's girth.

Alas! however, Mrs. Finn entertained none of those fine sentiments of unselfish love for Darby which animated her son. She could see no poetry in the cork-screw curl of Darby's tail as he grunted with pleasure while gnawing last year's cabbage stump. Her finer sensibilities had been roughened by the sandpaper of misfortune. Each pound Darby gained meant not added grace and proportion to her, but rather suggested the salty pork barrel and the sizzling frying-pan.

During all this time Mickey's old grey-bearded billy-goat was suffering the torment of unrequited affection. Day by day the billy saw Mickey go by him on his way to the pig-pen. But once, in three weeks long, did little Mick stop and gambol with the goat as he had been wont to do in the sweet old days before the coming of the hated Darby. The goat seemed to be aware that the affections of his master were waning away from him, "like the twilight of an autumn day."

Only a little sunlit hollow in Stumpy Field separated Darby and the goat. One morning, while yet the grass was bending beneath diamonds of dew, the goat came out of his barrel and stretched his legs. He looked off over the valley at the mists fleeing up the rugged sides of Snake Hill. He saw the faint flush in the east gradually deepen into a vivid blush of rose colour. Then he indulged in a little practice bucking.

While engaged in this harmless amusement the billy became aware suddenly that he was a free goat, no longer bound by the galling clothes line. Billy, having satisfied himself that he was no longer a captive ambled over to Darby's pen. The pig was asleep. He, however, was soon awakened. There was a battering-ram at his gate.

Once, twice, thrice did that implacable catapult hurl itself against the frail pen. Then the hemlock groaned in pain; it cracked, it broke. Darby sprang to his feet and squealed in fright. The hoofed demon with blazing eyes and ragged bangs, full of hemlock splinters, was in the pen.

Then began an awful struggle. Urged by the billy, Darby was forced out into the field and bowled over and over down the hill. The billy attended strictly to business. No sooner did Darby get on his feet than he was called on in a most forcible manner to lie down. When Darby had once more got his trembling legs under him he made one supreme effort and ran up the hillside. His ascent was materially assisted by the goat. But Darby was going towards the lime quarry! In headlong, blundering flight Darby rushed madly on. The bushes fringing the brink of the precipice were parted by the maddening rush of thirty-five pounds of animated pork.

A faint squeal rent the air of the beautiful May morning there was a dull and sickening thud on the rocks below, and lifeless, but beautiful, Darby lay.

Before Mickey missed Darby his uncle drove up to the door and invited him to make a short visit to Greenage. After her son had gone and the breakfast dishes were cleared away, Mrs. Finn went to the sty to have a look at the pig. There the awful reality dawned upon her—the wrecked sty, the freed goat, and the missing pig. But when she found Darby in the quarry she made no moan. In fact, she smiled and bore the body home in her strong arms.

The next morning Darby was tried by the fire and was not found wanting, for his jacket assumed a rich brown colour and the savoury smell that rose from the oven was sufficiently appetising to make the tongue of a gourmet palpitate in his mouth. Then Darby was put on a big plate and placed in the oven. There were a number of guests at dinner that day, among whom were Mrs. Murphy, Mrs. Cronin, Mike Welsh's wife, Patsey Corrigan's lass Nancy, and the one-legged accordion player.

Just as the guests sat down at the table Mickey returned, but his mother gave him a plate in the kitchen for certain prudential reasons.

Darby was indeed a beautiful sight, ornamented with sprigs of celery and with a fat lemon in his mouth. If he was lovely in life he certainly presented a very toothsome appearance in death. Mickey drummed upon the kitchen table with his knife-handle, because being

the younger, he had to wait until all the rest were served. But at last a big piece of tenderloin was placed before him. To his shame be it said, he actually neglected the potatoes on his plate and asked for a second piece of Darby before he touched the potatoes.

It is with deep regret that the occurrence is recorded but Mickey's plate was filled a third time, and in this instance it was a choice cut from the plump ham of his little protégé. After he had been filled to repletion, after the buttons of his vest had been relieved of dangerous pressure, he leaned back in his chair with grease on his face and a peace-with-all-the-world look in his eyes. Then his mother turned to him and said:

"Mickey, did ye like th' dinner?"

"Yis, mother."

"Won't ye hav' another little bit aff th' neck—jist a thrifle dear?"

"No, mother dear. I couldn't ate it; I'm full."

"Well, darlint, ye won't be freckened if I tell ye some-thin'?"

"No, mother, I will not."

"Well, that piece o' rib, an' that bit aff th' ham, ye're afther 'atin' kem off your Darby!"

If a bombshell had fallen at Mickey's feet he would not have been more startled. He leaned forward and big tears ran down his cheeks and mingled with the gravy in his plate. Then he laid his head down upon the table, and wept as if his heart would break.

A. MONDEY.

IT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.



You have only to look through the pages of PEARSON'S MAGAZINE to discover that it is the best and brightest magazine in the world.

The March Number is now on sale, price 6d.

Among the principal contents will be found:
PHOTOGRAPHING IN THE DARK.

A novel paper, illustrated with photographs actually taken in utter darkness.

WEARERS OF THE STRAWBERRY LEAVES.

Some interesting personal notes about our British Duchesses, illustrated with portraits.

THE NEW ART OF SELF-DEFENCE.

Describes how you may render yourself impregnable to any form of attack—illustrated with photographs showing how to overcome an assailant in every emergency.

BORES.

Describes and illustrates the most remarkable of tidal phenomena.

THE DOGS OF WAR.

All about the trained dogs of the Prussian Army.

UNDER WATER IN A DIVING TORPEDO-BOAT.

A thrilling account of a voyage in the American submarine-torpedo boat, "Holland," illustrated with photos.

With seven complete stories, and innumerable illustrations, printed on the finest paper, and inclosed in a beautiful cover—PEARSON'S MAGAZINE stands alone in interest and value.

A Pleasant and Instructive Competition for the Little Ones.



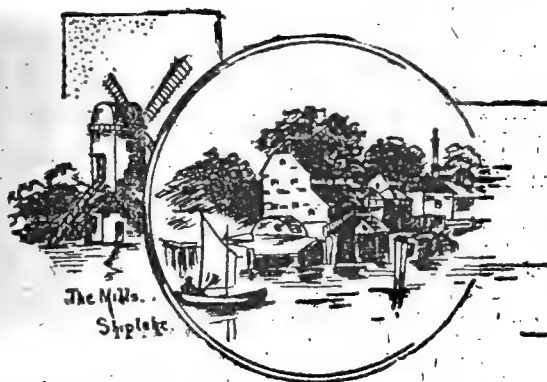
A CHARMING book has been issued by Messrs. C. ARTHUR PEARSON LIMITED, Henrietta Street, London, W.C., containing a number of outline sketches of flowers, specially drawn so that they can be painted. A coloured plate of each flower accompanies the sketch, so that the child can pick out the necessary tints. The price of the book is 3d., provided that this notice be cut out and forwarded with the three stamps to the BOOK DEPARTMENT, at the above address.

The Editress of *Home Notes* is offering fifty handsome prizes to the children who best paint the pictures in the book, and in order to give all children an equal chance, the competition will be divided into two sections—children over 12 and under 16, and children under 12.

TO WIN ONE OF THESE you have only to send three stamps to the BOOK DEPARTMENT, 17 and 18 Henrietta Street, W.C., asking for No. 1 of "Attractive Work." When you get it, paint the pictures and send it to the PICTURE BOOK EDITOR, *Home Notes*, Henrietta Street, W.C., not later than the first post on April 3rd. If a stamped envelope be sent for return, after judging the books will be sent back. If this is not desired they will be forwarded to the Ormond Street Children's Hospital.

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.

WITHOUT doubt there are many readers of *P.W.* who heartily sympathise with the FRESH AIR FUND, but are unable to subscribe to it. It is now possible for them to do so, for everybody must use soap. To help the Fund, Messrs. Jeyes' Sanitary Compounds Company Limited, have promised to hand over a farthing on every 2½d. bar of their "Fresh Air" soap sold in the United Kingdom during the current year. It can be had from the vendors of such commodities all over the country.



The Fate of the "Rosie."



"Yes, I think the time has now come to speak plainly."

Two men sat facing each other across a table in the private room of the chief of the shipping-house of Brandon and Co. One was a man of nearly sixty years of age; the other was about thirty-two. It was the latter, James Burk, the chief clerk of the firm, who had uttered the above words, and the man to whom they were addressed was Richard Brandon.

The old man fidgeted nervously and raised his eyes in one swift glance at Burk's face. The look which he saw on that face was not reassuring, for he dropped his eyes, and his agitation increased.

"What do you mean?" asked Brandon, hesitatingly, with the air of one who already knows the answer to the question he has just put.

"Let me see," said Burk, musingly. Outwardly he was calm, almost indifferent, but to those who understood him it was a sign of mischief or some deeply-laid plan. "It was on January, the twenty-first, 1871, as near as possible eighteen months ago, that the *Rosie* went on her last voyage."

He was interrupted by a suppressed groan from Brandon, which brought the faintest shadow of a smile to his face.

"The Brandon vessels had, and still have the reputation for sea-worthiness, which is rare at the present time, when everybody is full of horror at the revelations concerning the going to sea of rotten vessels which have been called 'Coffin Ships.' The *Rosie* was not a sea-worthy ship; her previous voyage had proved that she had reached the end of her career, but you sent her, heavily laden and heavily insured, to her doom, and the doom of the sailors on board was almost equally certain."

"Don't!" groaned Brandon.

"The ship was lost with all hands, and your purpose was effected. The firm was in the greatest straits owing to certain little transactions on the part of its principal, and the insurance money—which was largely in excess of the value of the ship—was quite a little windfall for you and enabled you to tide over the crisis. From that time things have gone far better and the firm is now prospering. I am the only man who knows what you did to save yourself."

He had leant forward to speak the last words, and as he saw Brandon's face grow still paler, the wicked smile again flitted over his lips and he sank back in the chair with an expression of triumph in his eyes.

For a moment the old man remained silent, then he rose from his chair with flushed face and sparkling eyes and burst forth fiercely:

"Burk, you are a villain! It was *you* who prompted me to do it when I was weak and ill, and overwhelmed with anxiety at the crisis which I had brought about by unwise speculations undertaken with the object of increasing the amount that I should leave to my daughter."

"In a weak moment, when I scarcely knew what I was doing, you whispered the tempting words to me—you took advantage of my weakness and made me do it—I did what others were doing, and are still doing. I saw no evil in it at that moment, but I swear to Heaven that I believed the crew would be saved. The ship had not gone one day when I awoke to the awfulness of my crime. Oh, Heaven! How bitterly I have repented it; how it has haunted me during all these months."

Exhausted by his outburst, Richard Brandon sank into his seat and covered his face with his hands.

"It is lucky that the door is padded to prevent confidential conversations being overheard," remarked Burk coolly. "Otherwise the clerks outside would have heard your little confession. I would advise you not to talk so loudly. In your righteous indignation,"—with a sneer—"you forgot to mention that you made use of the insurance money without scruple; you did not tell the insurance company that it was not just to accept it, and as to blaming me, that story will not hold water with the outside world when they learn all the facts; moreover, you are old enough to be responsible for your own actions."

"I won't say another word about it," returned Brandon, with just a show of firmness. "I had my scruples; but to have rejected the money would have meant ruin and disgrace. One crime necessitates another. What more do you wish to say?"

"As the manager of this concerned, I am entitled to more of the benefits than I now obtain. I am a bachelor and your daughter is twenty-one. I mean to marry her. That is brief and to the point, I think. In that way I shall inherit your fortune and business, and so reap the reward of my labours."

"*Rosie* will never consent to marry you!"

"I know that I am not the object of her affection," returned Burk, "but that is not a matter of importance. She is in love with Captain Manning, who does not find favour in your eyes. I mean to marry your daughter, and you must assist me, otherwise—Well, the story of the *Rosie*, named after your dead wife and your daughter, would cause some sensation just now, would it not?"

Brandon groaned in anguish, but he felt that he was in the power of this man; it was either disgrace and ruin or the sacrifice of his daughter.

"Leave me now," said Brandon brokenly, "and I will give you your answer to-morrow." Burk arose, pushed back his chair and left the private room without a sign of the triumph with which his heart was filled.

Two hours later Richard Brandon was pacing up and down his small study, awaiting the entrance of his daughter. "I will tell her all and leave it to her to decide. Oh, my child!" These were the words he continually repeated as he walked about the room.

"Oh, here you are, dad! I have just come in and I understand that you wish to see me in a great hurry. It must be something very important."

The words were spoken in a merry tone and the remark was rounded off with a happy laugh, as Rosie Brandon ran to her father, put her hands on his shoulders and kissed him heartily.

"But what is the matter?" she continued, her voice changing to a tone of anxiety and her pretty face clouding. "You don't look well. Oh, dear, I hope that dreadful business is not going to make you ill again as it did nearly two years ago!"

"Sit down, my dear," said her father gently, leading her to a chair. "I have something very serious to tell you. Heaven knows if I can tell you!"

Wondering, and with a vague sense of fear, all her brightness gone, Rosie sat down, while her father stood before her trembling in every limb. It was a situation almost unendurable; he had to confess to his daughter, who looked upon him as the very model of honour, a crime similar to that for which other shipowners were being held up to public execration. For crime it was, although others might call it "business."

Slowly with bent head and downcast eyes that never once sought his daughter's face, the old man related what had taken place in his private office that afternoon.

When he had finished, he waited for her to speak, but no sound came from her lips.

There was dead silence for a few seconds, then Brandon cast a swift glance at his daughter's face, as he had done previously at Burk's and the great change which had taken place in the countenance of his beloved daughter, nearly broke the old man's heart.

"Oh, Rosie, help me in this great trouble; I cannot hand you over to this man, yet I cannot bear to think of the disgrace that will fall upon you. For me, I am old and it will be easy to escape justice and the sneers of men!"

The dreadful underlying meaning of those last words aroused Rosie to the reality of the position. By a great effort she obtained control over her emotion and spoke quietly although with a slight quiver in her voice.

"The vessel went down in a storm, so I have heard; but I have not taken much interest in business and you tell me very little, because you say that I am not to be worried by office troubles."

"It foundered and all hands were lost."

"But *did* it founder?" persisted Rosie. "Vessels sometimes remain afloat for years, we often read of derelicts."

"The vessel had not behaved well on her previous voyage and I have no doubt that she went down. I know that derelict vessels float for months and even years over all the seas, but if by chance the *Rosie* had floated in a waterlogged condition, as others have done, it would not alter the fact that I sent her to sea when she was not seaworthy. It is a part of my punishment that my crime should be brought home to me by continually reading reports of the sighting of derelict ships, and the thought that one is the *Rosie*. I almost dread to read

the newspapers lest I shall see such a paragraph. It seems to burn its way into my very soul; the letters float before my eyes like a grinning spectre, I can hardly bear it."

He staggered to a seat. His daughter came and knelt before him.

"Let us try to face the trouble fairly, and see which is the best way out," she said very tenderly. She felt that it devolved upon her to be brave, and to stimulate this utterly crushed and dejected man to action.

"Father, have you tried to follow any abandoned ship?" she asked.

"Yes, my child," replied her father, wearily. "But such ships are like phantoms; you meet them unexpectedly, but when you wish to meet them, you may hunt the oceans for years and not see them. One was caught, but it was not my ship, and I have told you"—more wearily—"that it would make no difference in my guilt."

"Then I must marry Burk, or disgrace and ruin will fall upon us?" she asked.

The old man bowed his head in assent.

"Then I will marry Burk," she continued firmly. "Have no fear, father; it is the duty of a child to sacrifice herself, if needs be"—she could not quite control her voice at this point—"in return for all the love and care bestowed upon her. Filial duty is as great as parental duty, and I will not be found wanting."

"It must not be, I cannot bear it," cried the shipowner, with a return of energy. "It is too dreadful. I would rather that disgrace fell upon me and—not upon you. Oh, unhappy wretch that I am!"

"Leave it to me, father," said Rosie gently, taking his hands in hers as she arose and kissed him. "Let Burk come here and receive his answer from me."

That evening a cablegram went to New York addressed to Captain Arthur Manning of the *Merrie England*. It was handed to him just before the vessel started on her homeward voyage and made him open his eyes in surprise.

On the following afternoon, when Mr. James Burk, as well-groomed as ever, called at the Brandon residence, he found Miss Brandon awaiting him. She was self-possessed, and made no pretence at ignorance of the object of his visit, but went straight to the point with a brevity which rather amazed even that collected individual.

"You wish me to marry you," she said coldly, "and you are using your knowledge to force me to this union. You are aware that I have no affection for you?"

"My affection and admiration for you," he replied suavely, "will in time cause you to return my love. I am convinced of that."

"This marriage will be hateful to me," she went on. "Is there no alternative?"

"None."

"Then I must consent," said Rosie, scornfully. "I do it to save my father, and I do it on condition that the marriage must not be announced for three months. You must agree to that, although you wish it to be made known at once."

"I do; but I agree."

"And I warn you," continued Miss Brandon, "that during those three months I shall use every endeavour to thwart your present plan. If I do not succeed in that time, I must resign myself to be your wife. I think there is nothing more to say now."

"Nothing," he said, taking his dismissal in his usual

cool manner, "except that I admire you all the more for your spirit. I will leave you now."

"That's a fact," he murmured as he walked briskly towards the railway-station. "I admire that girl; she's got plenty of go. We shall make a splendid pair. James, you're getting on!"

He continued to be of that opinion for the next few days; he was more affable to his subordinates than was his wont, which somewhat mystified them. Then there came a change which disturbed the smoothness of the water upon which he seemed to be sailing.

Brandon and Burk were seated in the private room, the former signing cheques for current accounts—for although Burk was now really managing the business he had not obtained authority for that purpose. They were interrupted by a clerk, who handed a telegram to Mr. Brandon. It was marked "private" on the outside and was from his daughter; it ran thus:

Telegram from Manning. *Rosie* picked up close to Azores. No doubt.

"Anything fresh?" queried Burk, as the shipowner folded the telegram and placed it in his pocket. Burk had an uneasy suspicion that the telegram concerned him.

"Merely a few words from my daughter," replied Brandon, evasively.

But Burk was not many hours before he guessed at the contents of the telegram. It could not be kept a secret from the shipping world that the *Merry England* had towed into "Queenstown" harbour an abandoned vessel supposed to be the long-lost *Rosie*. This was a check to his plan, but he did not give up hope of winning.

The fact that the vessel had floated and braved all weathers for so long a period in a water-logged state did not upset the idea of unseaworthiness; he still had a hold upon Brandon who although he believed that the ship was not in a fit condition to be sent on a voyage, had nevertheless allowed it to go.

After a few maledictions under his breath Burk recovered his equanimity for awhile, although at times a certain fear oppressed him. His equanimity was destined to be totally upset by what followed when Captain Manning arrived in London.

He received a note from Miss Brandon asking him to call with reference to their undertaking. He was not quite easy in his mind concerning the object of this visit, but he was never a man to draw back.

He went, leaving Brandon in the office. Whether the ship-owner knew or not that he was going to call upon his daughter, Burk could not quite determine.

He was ushered into the study where he found Captain Manning, whom he of course knew quite well, as he was in the employ of the firm, and Rosie Brandon, who looked prettier than ever. He was not left in doubt for more than a few seconds as to the reason why he had been summoned there.

"Mr. Burk," said Rosie, when he was seated, "some re-arrangement of our agreement will be necessary after you have heard what Captain Manning has to say concerning the derelict."

"I am all attention," returned Burk with a polite bow.

"It is soon told," said Manning, a man of about the same age as Burk himself and who had attained his present position purely owing to his ability. "I did not include it in my official report on the finding of the *Rosie*, because I thought it better to mention it to you privately.

"The *Rosie* did not founder, but her crew feared that she would not weather the storm and so took to the boats. Unluckily, as often happens, all the boats appear to have been capsized."

"That is not fresh intelligence; we all know it now," said Burk.

"If she did not founder," continued Manning, "it was not the fault of one member of the crew. It is recorded in the captain's handwriting that a seaman was discovered in the act of scuttling the ship, and on being caught he confessed that he had been paid to do it by—Warm. isn't it?" queried Manning sarcastically, as he noticed Burk's flushed countenance.

"It's a lie!" cried Burk, loosing his self-possession.

"The man signed a confession, which the captain wisely drew up while the man was still under the influence of fear as to the result of his misdeed. To that confession was attached a few words in hand writing familiar to some of us.

"I found these documents in the captain's chest on board the *Rosie*. Unfortunately, the man had so far done his evil work that the ship was looked upon as doomed and she was abandoned. This seems to have been an error of judgment on the part of the captain."

"The evidence is against you, Mr. Burk," said Miss Brandon, interrupting. "The exact nature of your scheme I am unable to fathom, but I have discovered enough to know that you were trying to obtain a hold on my father. The *Rosie* never was unseaworthy; it was you who told my father that she had behaved badly on her previous voyage, and you wished to complete your plan by causing the ship to sink and so confirm your statement."

"I think there was no other reason for scuttling the vessel," said Manning before Burk could speak. "The note I have mentioned contained a reference to a sum of money and specie to that amount was on board the ship."

"There is sin on both sides," said Rosie with a chastened air, "but yours is the greater. My father's was committed in illhealth and overwhelming anxiety; yours in strength and it was premeditated. It will be better to bury the past and go on our separate ways.

"I told you I would thwart you if I could. I had read that the abandoned ship had been seen in the Atlantic and in my desperation I cabled to Captain Manning with my father's consent, to keep a look-out and to spend a day in searching for her, which he could do as he had no passengers. It seemed a hopeless task, but providence intervened and rendered possible that which seemed impossible. Our agreement is at an end."

She walked slowly to the door and opened it. ●

All the bearings of the position passed rapidly through Burk's mind, but he felt that he would not further his own ends by revealing all, even if he escaped punishment himself, and his genuine admiration for the girl decided him to accept the situation.

Ignoring Manning, he bowed polite to Rosie and passed out.

They never saw him again.

Soon after Manning was managing the business of Brandon and Co., for Brandon never really recovered from the effects of that terrible strain which had been too great for his weak constitution, and he died shortly after Rosie's wedding.

G. KNIGHT.

A Chilean Incident.



We were lying in the stream with the top-sails hanging in the buntlines. Everything was stowed ready for getting under way. The night was very dark, and the sky was obscured by lumpy clouds. It was dead calm, and the water was smooth and streaky.

Gantline and I sat on the forecastle rail, watching the lights of the city and small craft anchored closer in shore.

It was quite late, and our last boat had come aboard some time since, bringing our skipper, Jack Green, his pretty daughter and two passengers. At daylight we would clear with the ebb tide and land breeze with the early morning, and then, with good luck, we would make an offing and stand away for home. We were sick of the war-ridden country, and even the town of Valparaiso itself offered no attractions for us.

While we sat on the rail we heard a slight rippling in the water ahead of the vessel. It sounded as if a large fish was making its way slowly across the bows. We listened in silence for some moments while the sounds came nearer. I looked aft and saw two figures in the light from the after companionway, and I recognised

Miss Green, and the smaller of the two passengers standing close to the hatch.

The sounds in the water interested me no longer, and I gazed rather hard at the figures aft. The two passengers, who were missionaries on their way home, had been aboard ship several times during the last week, but they had always been so reserved in manner that I never once thought to see one of them talking to a young woman.

Suddenly, I heard a sound of someone breathing, followed by a smothered oath, coming from the direction of the rippling water which drew more and more beneath us.

"*Ha! Vola! Haze bein tiempo, manana*—lingo gets crossways of me gullet," came a deep voice from the black water.

"Och! stop ye blathering ijot, an' kape ye sinses. If them's dagoes on watch 'twill be all up with us. Whist, then! Ye men on the fo'c'stle?"

"What's the matter?" asked Gantline and I in the same breath.

"Faith, an' if ye have a drop o' th' milk of human pity in yer hearts, ye'll give two poor fellers a lift out o' this haythen country. Say not a whurd, but let us come on deck, quiet like. If ye don't the blood av two innocent men will be upon yer souls. Spake aisy."

"Now what kind of man is this?" asked Gantline, as a naked man climbed slowly up the martingale stays and crouched close to the starboard bow, out of sight of the man-of-war lying near us.

"By th' luck o' Lyndon! Is this old Tom Gantline who talks? Why, man, we've just escaped from th' prison on th' beach. Don't ye remember me? I'm Mike McMannus, only cousin to Reddy O'Toole who used to be mate with ye."

"No, I don't remember you," answered Gantline, "but if you had said you were anyone else you would have gone overboard again fast enough. No one but a chip of O'Toole would have come out here in this tide-way, right under the guns of that man-o'-war. Who's with you?" and he peered over at the man who still clung to the bob stays as if uncertain whether to trust himself on board or again swim for it.

"That's a man called Collins. He got taken along with me, when we was smugglin' in the rifles, up to the north'ard. Whist! below there, come up and make yerself known amongst friends. We're safe."

"I ain't so certain about that," growled Gantline,

"what am I to do with you but put you ashore? I can't run the risk of having the vessel overhauled for such fellows as you."

"Ah, shipmate, ye haven't the heart to turn us over, when all we've done was to try and land a few rifles fer thim poor fellows. Oh, me boy, ye haven't seen the inside of wan of thim black iron holes on th' beach, to talk of puttin' us ashore again. Six whol' months behind them steel walls an' niver see th' sun rise or set! Now, ye may be in sympathy with Chilly, bat ye have the look av a sailor man for all that."

As he spoke he climbed to the cat heads and drew himself gently to the top of the t'gallant forecstee. He was followed by the man, Collins.

They crouched shivering behind the capstan and I saw they were in a bad cond'tion. They were wasted and gaunt, and their flesh had a soft, sickly look, as if they had spent a long time in close confinement.

Gantline stood irresolute a moment, looking at their shivering forms. Then he glanced sharply at the man on watch, who walked in the port gangway. It was too dark to see him distinctly, so trusting that he in turn had seen nothing of what had occurred forward, he started aft.

The two figures I had noticed a few minutes before had now disappeared.

"Keep quiet," I said to the naked men whose teeth chattered in the cool night air. "Lie flat on deck until he comes back and perhaps we can do something."

The man, Mike, was about to make some reply, but at that moment the fellow on watch came close to the edge of the forecstee.

I stepped quickly in front of the man, and in doing so trod on a projecting foot which cracked horribly, and, twisting, brought me down in a heap upon them. A deep groan told of the damage done, but I instantly regained myself and began to hum a song in a low bass voice.

The man on the main deck stopped a moment and looked hard at me, but it was so dark he could see but little, and my singing reassured him, so he turned again and went off.

In a short time Gantline returned with a bundle.

"Now, bear a hand there, you men, and put these clothes on in a quarter less no time," he whispered. "Come, hurry up."

And he passed a shirt and a pair of dungeon trousers to each.

"Och! he has broken me toe off," groaned Mike, slipping on the garments.

His companion dressed rapidly in silence.

"Now then, up you go, both of you, into the fore-top and lie out of sight 'till we get to sea, and if I see a hair of your heads inside the next twenty-four hours I'll turn you both over on the beach. Here, take a nip apiece before you go," and he passed a small bottle to the men.

Gantline's seamed and livid face wore an anxious look as he took his place beside me and acted as if nothing had happened to seriously interrupt our former conversation. We sat a few moments discussing our stowaways and then went aft to get a little sleep before clearing.

I turned in and lay awake thinking of the men in the fore-top, hoping nothing would occur to make it necessary for more than one man to go aloft there. The sails were all loosed, except the fore-royal, and this I would go aloft for myself.

It was past midnight before I lost consciousness, and

it seemed almost instantly afterwards Gantline poked his head in my doorway and announced eight bells. I turned out and found it was still dark, but a faint light in the east told of the approaching day.

By the time the men finished their coffee, Captain Green came on deck, and then he gave the order to "Heave short." In a few minutes all was noise and bustle on the forecstee head.

Then we broke clear and swung off to starboard with the fore and main yards aback. Then we came round and stood out with the ebb tide, the light breeze sending us along with good steering way.

We had gone clear without mishap, but although we were making six knots an hour off the land, we knew the breeze would not hold after the sun rose. As we expected, it fell shortly after, and we lay becalmed a few miles off shore on a sea of oily smoothness.

The passengers came on deck to take a last look at the harbour and their voices sounded pleasant to the ear as they held forth on the beauties of a morning in the South Pacific.

These passengers had engaged berths more than a week before we sailed, and since then were almost inseparable. Their clothes were of some dark material, much alike in cut, but their faces and head-gear were in marked contrast.

"I was speaking to those poor fellows in the prison there, only yesterday," the younger one was saying as I came aft, "and I did my best to cheer them, but they were both much set against spiritual consolation, and the one McManus stole my pocket-knife with its saw blade which I used to carry to cut cocoanuts."

"How do you know it was he who took it; might you not have lost it?" asked the big man with a smile.

"Do you suppose I would bear false witness against any man?" replied the younger in a tone of reproach. "I noticed he came close to me while I was prying for him, and felt his hand touch me, but did not know my loss until after I left the prison. It will do him little good, however, as he and his companion in crime are to be shot this morning."

"Ah!" said the big man in a deep voice.

We drifted slowly all the morning, and about noon the sea-breeze set in from the southward and sent us along at a comfortable rate. Nothing occurred to make it necessary for a man to go aloft in the fore-top, and those who had gone up the main and mizzen in the early morning had noticed no thing unusual. The platform in the top was as large as that in a full-rigged ship, so the men who were hiding were not visible from the deck as long as they lay flat on their backs.

Gantline had decided to tell the skipper the whole affair of the night before, but the old man was in such a bad humour that the mate delayed telling him until the prospect of a serious burst of anger was less apparent.

The day wore on and the vessel held steadily on her way, making from eight to ten knots an hour.

After supper the skipper came on deck with his passengers and they were soon joined by Miss Green. They sat aft and chatted, the men smoking and very much at their ease.

There was something in the younger passenger that attracted Miss Green to him. There was a mysterious power about the man that was apparent to anyone after being an hour in his company. Something in his deep, vibrating voice, when he was talking, appeared to hold the attention, and I, more than once, looked at him as he sat next to the skipper's daughter, holding forth on matters of the church.

Captain Green was still in a bad humour, because of his low freight money, and it was evident that he would ease his pent-up feelings on someone.

He had listened to the talk of the missionaries with ill-concealed contempt, whenever they fell to discussing their ecclesiastical affairs, and now he asked the younger abruptly, when he was to return.

"Ah!" replied he, "I shall return as soon as possible, for my flock will get along poorly without me. I have converted many chiefs, who wrangle among themselves, as has also my friend here."

The skipper turned with a look of disdain at the big-bearded man, who appeared to understand the implied interrogation, and hastened to answer. "It is true, I have converted many," he said in a low voice, "but I shall not return to the Islands of the Pacific, for I think there is a better field nearer home. Not that I believe my labours wasted, for the converted natives never stole anything but ammunition and utensils, while the others stole everything from me they could lay hand to. Not that the effort was entirely in vain, I say, but that better work can be done among our own people, such as sailors, for instance."

"Eh! What's that?" growled Green as he listened to the last part of this sentence; "What do you mean by sailors?" and his eyes flashed ominously.

"Why, go among them, and see that they get the proper books in the libraries sent out on vessels for them to read, for instance."

"Now you are talking some sense. Instead of whining around among a lot of good-for-nothing niggers, like your friend here, you'll really do something if you follow that up. Yes, sir, if you'll only put something in these libraries besides 'Two Years before the Mast,' and the like, and get some police reports nicely bound, along with some yarns like 'Davy Crockett,' you'll be a blessing to sailors, and skippers, too, for that matter. No, sir, don't play with those islanders any further. They were all right before they ever saw the likes of you, and they've been all wrong ever since. You talk like a man of sense, after all, and I hope what I've said won't be lost on you." And as he finished his peroration, he stood up and looked astern.

"Hallo!"

Before the astonished missionaries could say a word the skipper started for his glasses and seizing them, he looked steadily at a faint trail of smoke which rose above the horizon directly in the vessel's wake.

"That's strange," he muttered. "There's no steamer bound out to-day, and yet that fellow seems to be standing right after us."

"Mr. Gantline!" he called, as he turned where the mate stood. "Go aloft with the glass and see if you can make out that fellow astern of us."

"Aye, aye, sir!" answered Gantline, and he took the skipper's glass and made his way leisurely up the main ratlines.

From the lower top he could see nothing but a black funnel, and masts without yards, so he went higher. On reaching the cross-trees he looked forward, and there, lying prone on their stomachs, were the two hiding men.

Their eyes were straining at the vessel astern, and even if Gantline had not already made out who she was one look of those faces would have told him. He came on deck and returned the skipper's glasses without a word, and then started forward, but Green stopped him.

"Could you make her out?" he asked.

"Well, there isn't much of her rising yet, but I suppose she's the *Blanco Encalada*," he answered.

"Seems to me it is hardly time for her to put to sea," growled the skipper, "and she's making almost the same course as we are." And the old man turned back to his passengers.

Before two bells in the first watch that evening, it was blowing half a gale to the southward out of a clear sky, and the old ship flew along on her course.

There was no sea running, so she heaved over and drove along at a rate that bade fair to keep the *Blanco* below the horizon for several hours. As it grew late the air became quite chilly, and the skipper went below with his passengers.

The moon rose and shone with great brilliancy, so that our towering main-skysail must have been visible a long distance. All night we drove along with nothing visible astern, and at daybreak the hull of the steamer was still below the horizon.

At seven bells Green came on deck.

"Now what's he after?" he growled, as he gazed astern. "It is the *Blanco*, after all, Gantline; but what makes him hold on like this? We are going to the westward of Juan Fernandez, and that is more than a hundred miles out of his course."

The mate made no answer but went on with his work.

"It's just like those dagoes to go running all over the southern ocean for no other purpose than to wear out their gear and burn coal," continued the skipper. "If this wind keeps slackening up, he ought to be abreast of us before noon, though I never knew this old trooper to go at the rate she's been doing all night. Breakfast did you say? Mr. Gantline, you may let her head a point more to the north'ard."

Saying this, the skipper took a last look at the approaching warship and then disappeared down the companion-way.

Although the vessel still raced along at a rate that sent the foam flying from her sharp clipper bows, she was no longer doing her utmost, and the *Blanco* rose rapidly in her wake with the black smoke pouring from her funnel.

Suddenly, while Gantline was watching her, she appeared to be enveloped in a white cloud of steam. Then there was a sharp, shrieking rush as something tore its way through the air close to the mainyard, and struck the smooth sea almost half a mile ahead, followed by the sullen boom of a heavy gun.

The rush of the shot brought Captain Green on deck, closely followed by his passengers.

"What's the matter," he bawled, as he rushed to the taffrail, while the younger passenger, who had followed close at his heels, smiled grimly.

The *Blanco* came driving along heavily a couple of miles astern. She was rapidly drawing up.

"Wants us to heave to, I suppose," growled Gantline, and he eyed the skipper suspiciously.

"Man alive!" roared Green. "Why don't you do it, then, before he cuts the spars out of us? Fore and main royals, there, quick! Let go by the run. Main clew garnetts.—All hands!" And the skipper bounded on to the poop, and cast off everything he could lay his hands on.

The ship was soon luffed and her main yards backed. Then the *Blanco* came abreast and all hands had a chance to look into the muzzles of her ten-inch guns which were trained toward us. A swarm of men crowded the deck of the ironclad, while a boat shot out from her side, and

approached us rapidly, with a short, thick-set man in uniform sitting in the stern sheets.

Green stood at the break of the poop, scowling at him as he swung himself lightly into the mizzen channels, and leaped on the quarter deck, followed by six men. Hardly had he done so, when the younger of our two passengers drew a heavy revolver from somewhere behind his back, and fired point blank at this officer.

The Chilian was in the act of drawing his sword, and the hilt was across his breast at that instant. The bullet intended for him struck the hilt and flattened on the brass. The next instant there was a rapid fusillade, the six Chilians firing together, and the passenger with a six-shooting revolver in each hand, backing away behind a cloud of smoke.

It was all over in half a minute. Three of the blue-jackets were dead and their officer badly hurt when the firing ceased. The passenger tossed his empty pistols over the side and staggered aft and not one of the survivors dared to follow him. He gained the after companion-way, and as he did so the figure of the Captain's daughter appeared on deck.

I could see her face pale as she caught the look in the passenger's eyes, but she said no word. He went to her and kissed her lightly and passed on to the starboard taffrail. The Chilians now recovered themselves and rushed for him. He climbed over with difficulty, but did not hesitate. Then he plunged headlong into the sea before anyone could seize him, and as we rushed to the side we could see his body sink slowly down into the green depths until it finally vanished.

The skipper, Gantline, and the big missionary stood looking on in amazement, and then the wounded officer turned toward the m.

"That was Senor Jose Zacaticar—of course you did not know," and he nodded to the skipper. Then the dead were placed in a boat while a tourniquet was passed round the officer's leg to stop the flow of blood until he could reach his ship. In a few moments he and his men were on their way back to the *Blanco*.

Green stood staring after them without a word. The name of the dead desperado was too well known to him to protest against the manner he was treated while on an English ship, but he desired some explanation.

The *Blanco* dipped her colours and he came to his senses. "Hard up the wheel, there," he bawled. "Stand

by the lee-brace," and the vessel paid off again on her course.

The ironclad headed away to the northward and in a few minutes was a couple of miles away.

"I met him only a week ago," explained the big missionary, in answer to the skipper's look, "and I thought, of course, he was what he claimed to be."

Green gave a grunt and went aft.

"Mr. Gantline," said he, as he met the mate, "are there any more missionaries aboard this ship, for if there are, we will put them ashore on Mas-a-fuera."

"There are two more," answered Gantline, looking the skipper in the eyes.

"Show them to me," said the skipper.

Gantline went forward and looked aloft.

"Come down from there!" he bawled, and two lean figures stood in the fore-top and then painfully descended the ratlines before the astonished gaze of the crew.

When they gained the deck they followed the mate aft to Green, who stared at them in amazement.

"We are off soundings and that fellow has no right to board me," he said, "but if you belong to that Joss gang, I'll signal for him to come back for you."

"Faith, an if we did, Captain Green, it isn't such a crowd av cutthroats as ye seem to belave," said McManus. "The fact is, we're just broke away from bein' shot for no more than the carryin' av a few Remingtons. I see ye remember me, so for th' sake av auld times ye better give us a passage home an' not make Crusoes av us on the Farnandez."

Green looked at Gantline.

"It's the truth," said the mate.

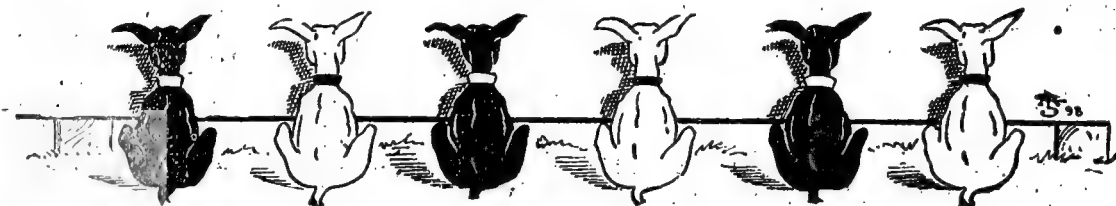
"Who says it's the truth? I'll——"

At that moment a slight figure appeared at the companion-way and the next instant Miss Green seized her father's arm. He turned roughly, but there was something in the poor girl's face that made him look at her. She led him below and the escaped men stood staring after her.

"You fellows can turn to with the men forward," said Gantline, and they went.

A little later Green came on deck again and stood looking silently over the bright Pacific. He stood there by the taffrail looking long at the eastern horizon. No one approached or spoke to him for all knew Green when his mind was full of unpleasant memories.

ARTHUR SELBORNE.





BOOK IV.—CONCERNING A SOJOURN AMONGST THE DAJIAN.

CHAPTER I.

How Sneyd and O'Neill landed on Daji: how they were imprisoned in a prehistoric temple: how they tried to break gaol: how they met with an impediment: and how they had an unexpected lady visitor.

SAVE for the summit of its central peak, and the tops of some of the ridges which shoot out of it like the rays of a great stone star, Erma, as viewed from the sea, was one great collection of greens, varying to all shades. It looked fertile, and it did not belie its looks. The place was a tropical garden.

It is impossible for soil that is capable of sustaining plant life to be barren in the tropics. But you could see, as you approached it, that a larger part of Daji was bare and barren. Steep sterile rocks rose in gaunt ridges from the vegetation in the lower ground, and stood out bleakly against the warm skies beyond. Nothing grew on them. They were utterly destitute of soil. Even the teeming orchids, which are independent of mould to grow in—even the o.cids whose lovely uncouth forms swarmed everywhere else, left these stony wildernesses to their chilly barrenness. Only the screaming seafowl tenanted the crags. They were not dependent upon soil. The seas around were their hunting ground. The bare wind-swept rock was the roosting-place and nesting-ground they preferred to all others. Besides, the crags were for the most part steep and precipitous; and man, the biped who ruled below, being wingless, could not annoy bird, the biped who reigned in the air above.

This the island of Daji was divided, and I think that the feathered portion of the inhabitants had the easier life of it, for food was always to be had for the fishing, and sickness was unknown. But with the men and women it was different. Starvation was an item which had very often to be calculated in their economy of daily life. Their husbandry was crude perhaps, but the ground suitable for cultivation was small. There was a great deal of swamp on the lower part of the island, and mangrove bushes reticulated over this in hopeless luxuriance. The ubiquitous coconut palm was there of course, but not in large quantities, and the other fruit trees did not bear in any generous profusion. There was, in fact, just a little less than enough of everything; and life on Daji was consequently often very hard.

Neither Sneyd nor O'Neill saw the island as the fleet approached it. Still securely lashed to their respective poles, they were lying like logs in the bottom of a big canoe. The tepid bilge-water swished over them as the vessel cut at the laboured seas. The crew trod over them as though they had been sacks of ballast.

They were not starved. Twice since their capture food and water had been stuffed down their throats. But for all that, they were in a very miserable condition—stiff, cramped, sore.

The passage was not a pleasant one for anybody. Stores were few. An army in full retreat is not generally over-loaded with luxuries. But every voyage has an end somewhere, either on a shore, or in mid-sea, and this was no exception to the rule. Save for one which broached to and got swamped, all the canoes were safely beached on Daji, where they were unloaded of what they happened to have in them, and then run up high and dry.

All the population which had been left behind flocked down to the shore. In time of peace the postal arrangements between the islands consisted of one canoe-load of news per annum. During the war there had been no communication whatever. So a good many married women suddenly found themselves widows, and a number of old men learnt that they had no longer a stalwart son to support them in their failing years. It is the fortune of war that such things should happen; still these people were desperately angry none the less, and sought to vent their fury upon the only two representatives of the island of Erma within reach—to wit, Laurence Sneyd and Murtagh O'Neill. And indeed they would have proceeded to glut their passions by tearing these unfortunates to shreds, had not their captors interfered, and pushed the aggressors on one side with scant ceremony. They had had all the trouble of bringing the two white men across, and they were not going to have them wasted merely to gratify petty spite. The two prisoners could not atone for all the Dajian youths who had been killed. Besides, the pair were destined for another fate. They would die surely enough, and that soon. But they were destined for the oven, and it was no use mauling them about first, and rendering them unfit to eat.

Actuated by these humane sentiments their captors carried the two Europeans up to the nearest village, placed them in a hut for the night, and posted a guard to see that no malicious person came near and damaged them; and having supplied them with food, they left them to their own devices.

Directly they found themselves alone, the restless pair as usual set about trying to get free. By dint of severe exertion, which in their then weak state told heavily, they

contrived, by rolling over and over, to get alongside one another—heads and tails; and then each selected a part of the other's lashings, and began steadily gnawing it in one spot.

Well laid-up grass rope is tough stuff, and unsatisfactory feeding at the best of times, and just now they found it desperately dry and unpalatable; but as men will, who are in such a plight, they stuck grimly to their self-imposed task, and divided it fibre by fibre. Sneyd had got but half-way through his rope, when O'Neill's gave in two; but the gross result of each man's work was the same, for at that moment one of the guards showed his head in through the doorway, renewed the lashings, rolled the prisoners to opposite walls, and made each fast there by a heel rope that was quite ungettable.

"There," said the guard; "now do keep quiet, and give me no more trouble."

"We'll just have to do that same, ye spalpeen," growled O'Neill; "thanks to this last piece of delicate attention. Begob, av I could get loose an' die quietly fightin', it's little more I'd ask. But to lie tied up here, like a bullock waiting to be pithed, is a thrifle too much for me nerves. It makes me restless, an' inclined to feel dangerous an' murthersome."

"I'm not going to give up hope till I've got my throat cut," observed Sneyd. "I was pretty much down in the mouth just before that first shave. It was a near thing and no mistake. If the messenger had been ten seconds later, he'd have been too late for us. But when we got off then, my spirits went up with a bound. I felt sure we should escape somehow. I made certain, though, Sandy would contrive to help us."

"And Sandy didn't. He's as decent a boy as iver stepped, an' would have done anything that was widin his power to get us clear. But the fact remains that he didn't manage it, whether he tried or not; and the result is, we're here."

"He might contrive to come over and carry us off."

"He might," replied O'Neill drily. "But we can rest pretty sure that he won't. I don't think these Daji blayguards got much of a licking. I believe they left Erma principally because they'd had a bellyful of fightin', an' wanted to get home widout further loss o' men in small give-an-take skirmishes. But they've the stronger force left still, an' it's a very small mouthful of the Ermans they'd make av they came over here, dhrum, fife, army,

and baggage, wid Sandy Carmichael marching at their head. No, I don't think we can count much upon that."

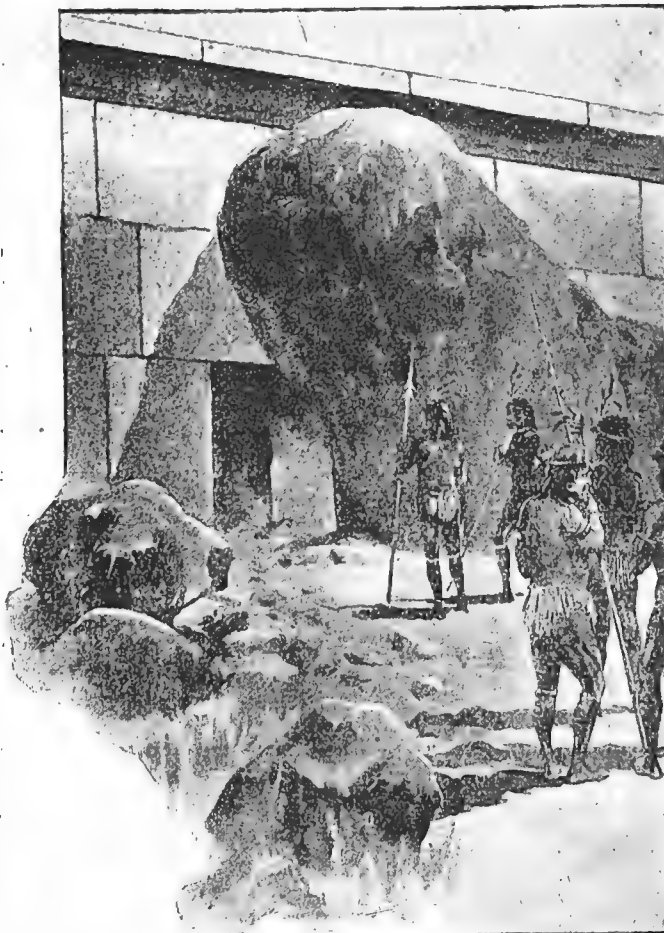
"I wasn't altogether thinking of an invasion in force," said Sneyd. "But I was hoping that Sandy would scheme some idea for making a quick raid with a few men, and getting us away before more than a dozen people knew we'd gone. I've heard of such things being done in the continental wars at home."

"Ay, but who is it that makes those sort of dashes? A clever officer and a party of picked men. Sandy may be the one, if you like, but his following couldn't be the other, however they were chosen. You might pick amongst those

naygurs in Erma as carefully as you liked, but none of them would be 'picked men.'"

O'Neill's words were paradoxical, but the meaning of them was incontrovertable. There was no combination on Erma capable of making a successful foray in an enemy's camp. Assistance could not be expected from without. And as at present their bonds forbade them to help themselves, there was nothing for it but to await the course of events as stoically and philosophically as might be. And so, having arrived at this conclusion, and judging from the Irishman's snore that he had done the same, Sneyd shut his tired eyes, and fell into a deep dreamless sleep.

The sun was high above the mountain tops when they were awakened. If left to themselves, the intense weariness which their recent hardships had engendered would have doubtless kept them in Morpheus' arms still longer, despite the hardness of their cold earthen couch, and the merciless tightness of their bonds. But at that time a number of Dajians entered the hut, and rudely kicking them into wakefulness, proceeded to examine them



The Europeans found themselves before a square building.

much in the way that men in the farming interest at home here examine animals at a fair. The savages pinched their arms and legs, prodded them in the ribs, and were evidently much disgusted at their condition. Both were sinewy and lean; one might use the word emaciated, in fact; and Sneyd in particular, who was always a spare man, would now, so one of the connoisseurs affirmed, be as unsatisfactory feeding as the husk of a dropped cocoanut.

The committee of inspection shook their heads gloomily. These two white bearded prisoners they had taken so much trouble about, and expected to prove such delicacies on the table, turned out very unsatisfactory when subjected to a close inspection. They were simply not worth cooking as



Sneyd hurried to the brink, and looked down.

they were now. There was nothing for it but to keep them, and supply them with plenty of fattening food till they got into better condition. And so an order was given, and the two Europeans found themselves once more being borne like logs on men's shoulders.

Though treated with more care now, the means of progression was far from being a pleasant one. The boughs of overhanging trees scratched their faces; the jolting of the bearers made the ligatures of grass rope cut more deeply into their arms and bodies. But the thought that another respite was before them, gilded these minor discomforts, and made them feel that the journey was not without its pleasant side.

The route lay up a valley, for the first part a long narrow pathway fairly tunnelled through masses of rank foliage. But as they climbed upwards, the vegetation thinned and grew scantier. It consisted mainly of stunted bushes and wind-distorted trees, with patches of scrubby grass interspersed with fallen boulders, and outcrops of mother rock. There was no vestige of track, and the place was evidently but very seldom visited.

After a while the cortège stopped, and the Europeans found themselves before a square building of time-worn plain stone blocks, and topped with a heavy cornice. In the middle of the side facing them was a great rock, bent, so to speak, to an angle, which had equal arms. One of these arms, or limbs, was lying on the ground when they came up; but a couple of the escort climbed up on to the summit of the other by means of steps evidently cut for that purpose and their weight made the stone slowly revolve till the other limb rose in the air and disclosed a doorway.

Through this the Europeans were carried. Their bonds were cut, a quantity of food was placed down near them, and the escort withdrew. The stone door was swung back into place, and they were alone.

But though unfettered, it was a long time before they regained the use of their limbs. Through being kept for so long in one fixed position, their muscles had got stiff, and their extremities were half dead from the tightness of the ligatures which had bound them up. But by degrees they got their cramped fingers to resume their natural functions and after a vigorous course of massage, they rubbed the

circulation back into their other limbs, and were able once more to stand upright.

No one will doubt what they did first. Just then, they were men with but a single idea. Their whole minds were absorbed in the one question of escape. And so they set about examining their prison with a view to this end. It was a plain square, built of great blocks so accurately dressed that they fitted too closely one above the other for the blade of a penknife to be inserted between them. Needless to say, it was not the work of the present race of Dajians, or even of their racial forefathers. It was the outcome of that forgotten civilisation; the work of that old people which once inhabited the great continent which the Pacific has submerged, and a few of whose monuments are still to be seen on the peaks of Polynesia.

But for the history of their gaol, these two men cared not one rap. Only one thing led them to examine it. They wanted to find a way out.

They inspected the doorway first. Sixteen feet through the thickness of the wall, was the great block which slid across the portal. So accurately did it fit at the sides, that not a ray of light from the bright glare without shone through into the gloomy passage. So closely did it press on the threshold, flag below, that no lever's point could have been pressed in to prize it up, even had they possessed a lever to try with.

"Evidently," as O'Neill remarked, "the porter was always stationed outside."

Next the walls of this strange old-timed temple—for temple it undoubtedly was—came in for their share of scrutiny.

"I've heard," said Sneyd, "of pivot blocks which will turn if they are pressed at the right point."

So they tried every stone in the lower course in turn, thrusting against both ends of each with all their combined weight, and not desisting till they had gone methodically the round.

"That cock won't fight," observed O'Neill as he sat down for a minute's rest, and wiped the streaming perspiration from face and forehead. "An' we ain't strong enough to heave the whole wall-side over bodily. What do yez say now to climbing up to the top?"

"It would be a very good idea, but not being flies, I don't exactly see how we are to carry it out. The stones are five feet thick at the very least, and they fit far too close together to let us drive pegs into the spaces between them, even if we had the pegs to drive. Remember they've taken our knives away."

"There's wood enough in this jungle of brush and scrub which fills the place to make pegs of any we wanted 'em, and at a pinch we could sharpen 'em with our teeth. But the bhoys that built the place masoned it too nately to let any one play that sort of prank with their work. I only suggested climbin' up to see if yez could knock out an idea."

"I'm afraid it's beyond me," said Sneyd, musingly. "But," he exclaimed, as if struck by a sudden happy thought, "but I don't see what is to prevent us from undermining them. Of course the foundations will be deep, but if we work hard enough, and are allowed sufficient time, we should be able to drive a passage under them into the open outside."

"Begob now, but that's a great notion."

"Of course," continued Sneyd, "we shall have to exercise caution. We mustn't go and delve a great chasm, and just chuck the stuff we take out all in one big heap at the side. When the fellows come to bring us food, they would see that in a moment, and lash us up again pretty sharp, or take some other measures to keep us safe. They are not altogether fools, you know. The thing will have to be done with caution. We must take out one big block of roots and soil all in a solid piece, and put that on one side. Then we must start digging beneath, pound the stuff, we take out into small dust, and scatter it about beneath

the bushes where it can't be noticed. Then when any one comes, we can clap the lid on our hole, and then none of them will be any the wiser about what has been going on."

"Here," exclaimed O'Neill, "are a brace o' sharp-edged flat stones—shovel an' pick combined—let's begin before the grass grows any longer under our feet."

Getting out the first surface slice in one unbroken wedge was a longer job than had been anticipated; for the ground was one mass of interlacing roots, and the tools were but ill adapted to cutting them through. However, by continual exertion and vigorous effort, the tangled mass gave way little by little; and at last, breaking adrift from its moorings altogether, was hoisted out and laid carefully on one side. It was quite intact, and as all sides sloped inwards from the top, it would always fit in its place without falling into the cavity beneath.

Then they started on the matter below. It was almost wholly made up of loam that had been formed by successive generations of plant, that had grown, died, rotted, and been replaced by others. The debris they scraped out was easily disposed of too; for it was easily disintegrated, and so could be readily sprinkled about, and got out of sight.

The excavation deepened apace, and the spirits of the miners rose accordingly.

"Av the blayguards don't get hungry, an' ate us before we're nicely fat, I don't see why with reasonable luck they should eat us at all."

"Not unless they turn up suddenly, and unexpectedly, and twig what's going on. And even if the lid did happen to be in place, we're as grimy as a pair of navvies—skin, rags, everything plastered with this black mould. If we'd only water enough to wash in, it would be all right, but as it is, I don't see how we are to get it off."

"Faith, then we'll let it stay where it is. An' av they ask any questions, we'll just say we were grubbing for roots—which is a fact—an' to prove it, we'll just tear up a big hole right in front of the entrance there, so that they can see it for themselves."

So they made their decoy, and then went back and delved in the more important hole. This had gone down six feet now, sloping towards the wall; and for the last eighteen inches or so it had laid the stone bare. There was no signs of the foundation yet, and so they worked on without any feelings of disappointment. The labour was hard. To avoid bringing more debris to the surface than was absolutely necessary, they kept the diameter of the hole to the smallest possible minimum that was compatible with any moving about, and so their positions when down below were very cramped. But the loam yielded easily when they got past the region of living roots, and it could be scraped up by the digger as rapidly as the worker above could dispose of it by sprinkling under the bushes. A couple of rude baskets, woven from withes and leaves, aided this process, and whilst one was being emptied above, the other was replenished in the pit below.

And so they went on till, when about eight feet below the surface O'Neill, who was digging, uttered a fierce exclamation. Sneyd hurried to the brink and looked down. The Irishman was scraping furiously away at the bottom of the pit, accompanying his strokes by a torrent of invective against all things in general, his own luck in particular.

"Eight blessed fut of cave dug, wid the sweat on our brows an' the bark off our knuckles; an' then to be brought up wid a round turn like this. Howly wars! it's enough to make a bhoys chuck up the whole business in disgust. An' what did the fools that built the place want to be so luxurious for? Bether men than them has lived an' died in a cabin wid a mud floor. Bad scran to them, what for did they want to go and lay down a tessellated pavement? Misdirected haythens; why couldn't they have stuck some beams across the wall-tops and shoved their flag-stones a-top o' them, by way of a roof? They've got their furo caulked as tight as the end of a whiskey-keg, sorra leak about it; oh, y'have come to look?"—This to Sneyd, who had asked what was the matter—"Then see there. See that paving-stone. I've been grubbing around on all sides. The whole place is floored with 'em. Look at the way the edges of thim fit. Not room for a thumbnail between them. We've no chance of tearing them up. They are cemented together. Even if we had knives we couldn't shove a blade in the chinks. I guess this road's blocked for good."

"Not a bit of it," retorted Sneyd. "We can't prize those stones up, and we can't cut them through, because we've neither chisel nor pick; but if we stick to it long enough, we should be able to beat away at the corner of one of them with other stones, till we have splintered a piece off. Then, once a hole made, we can surely muster brute strength enough to wrench something away."

"For an idea suggested on the spur of the moment," said the Irishman, "that's the best I've heard for some time. But I don't know how it will act. The bastes that built this place were fond of heavy stuff, an' these flags may be a yard thick, for anything we know. And even av we do get through the stone, there's a hape more quarrying to be done before we're under the foundations, an' still more before we sniff outer air again. It's a wintry lookout."

"It might be better," Sneyd assented. "But I don't see that we have any other chance. Anyway, we may as well stick to it. Tumble up and let me take a turn."

The pavement did not prove so thick as O'Neill had feared; but fifteen inches of solid stone had to be pounded and splintered away, before the under surface was reached; and then, so firm was the cement in which it was set, the remainder of the flag had to be disintegrated before it would quit its bed. Beneath this, to their unutterable disgust, the unfortunate men came upon a layer of concrete, so hard as almost to defy their fiercest attacks. The stones



He was evidently d'sappointed that they had not laid on more fat.

they pounded it with ground away piecemeal, without producing any appreciable effect on the adamant surface. But by almost imperceptible degrees it was worn down, and if they had been allowed time, they doubtless would have penetrated it in time. But a *Deus ex machina*, in the form of a Dajian, put a stop to their efforts.

As the reader is quite aware, these interesting cannibals had placed their prisoners into the old temple to fatten, and not to contrive an escape. Food was brought in every two days; and the bearers, after satisfying themselves that the captives were safe, withdrew without further inspection. Every week the chief who owned them came and looked at his stilled white men in person, and examined them, to see how much flesh they were putting on, with callous familiarity.

This went on for a month, and then the old rascal considered that the feeding process had gone on for long enough. He was evidently disappointed that his captives had not laid on more fat, and fingered their hard stringy muscles with a comical expression of disgust. He could not understand how men, who, as he thought, did nothing except eat and sleep, could remain so lean and sinewy; but giving up the problem in despair, or solving it by supposing that thinness was in the white man's breed, he stalked out of the enclosure, giving some instructions to his followers as he went.

"Did you hear what that old reptile said?" exclaimed Sneyd, as the stone swung across the portal, and they were once more alone.

"No; what was it?"

"He was telling his men that he would have us cooked on the second day from this. He said it was a waste of time and good victuals to keep us talled here any longer."

The Irishman's jaw dropped. "The game's up," he said. "It's no use going on wid the tunnel. Av we were through that infernal concrete, which I don't think we are nearly, two days isn't sufficient to get under the wall an' up agin t'other side."

"I don't think the game is altogether up," replied Sneyd doggedly. "We've managed to scrape clear so far, and I truly believe luck will see us through. At any rate, I've got my hands free now, and when those brute come to take us away, they'll find me rather hot and heavy to hold."

"That, of course," replied the Irishman. "I'm not going to have my throat slit like a pig now. Not if I know it. I'm going to go down, warm and comfortable, in a decent scrimmage. Begob, av we got over on either side of the entrance yonder, we could make it awkward for anyone who tried to come in. I can rig up a sweet weapon out of a hard stone, an' three or four of these thin springy shoots, by way of a handle. The clubmanship we learned in Erma'll come in handy for fingerin' that."

"Well, you see," said Sneyd, "there's a chance. We can

brain all those who have pluck enough to venture in, and then go out, kill the cowards who have stayed outside, and afterwards make for the hills. Very likely there won't be a dozen altogether. There certainly won't be twenty."

So, having come to this vigorous resolve, they set about making the weapons, with which they hoped to carry it out.

During the whole period of their imprisonment up to now, the slumbers of these two men had been disturbed by hideous dreams, and torturing nightmares. The suspense in which they lived acted on their nerves, and though they quelled the excitement by sheer will power during the waking hours, when sleep held sway, the mental disorders asserted their own. They talked excitedly; they moved about, and gesticulated violently; and once each woke up, half-strangled, to find he was clutching his companion by the throat.

But when they knew a day had been fixed, when there was no more agonising uncertainty, when they had been definitely warned that in forty-eight hours' time the butchers would come for them, then their suspense and their speculations were at an end, and they slept calmly, soundly, restfully.

So it happened that, when a figure appeared on the summit of the temple wall far above them, and called their names, neither was aware of the intrusion, and neither woke. The new arrival called, and called again, each time in a louder voice; and at last, as though in desperation, bawled out with full lung-power.

O'Neill rolled over, rubbed his eyes, yawned, and hailed back: "Ahoy there!" He had just dreamt of sailing back to Erma with Norah, and imagined that a boat was rowing up and trying to speak to him.

"Ahoy there!"

The voice called his name again.

The Irishman leaped to his feet. "Great powers!" he exclaimed; "is that you, Norah?"

"'Tis," replied the girl. "I made a bamboo ladder, and climbed up. I've come to help you."

"It's a dear, kind angel y'are," replied O'Neill. "But you shouldn't have ventured in this haythen country. But, Norah, darlint," he continued, as another thought struck him, "have yez a score or so of the Erma bhoys at yer pretty heels?"

"No, Murtagh, I'm alone. I came for your sake. I thought I might save you. And if I was too late for that, I'd have let

the Dajians have me too!"

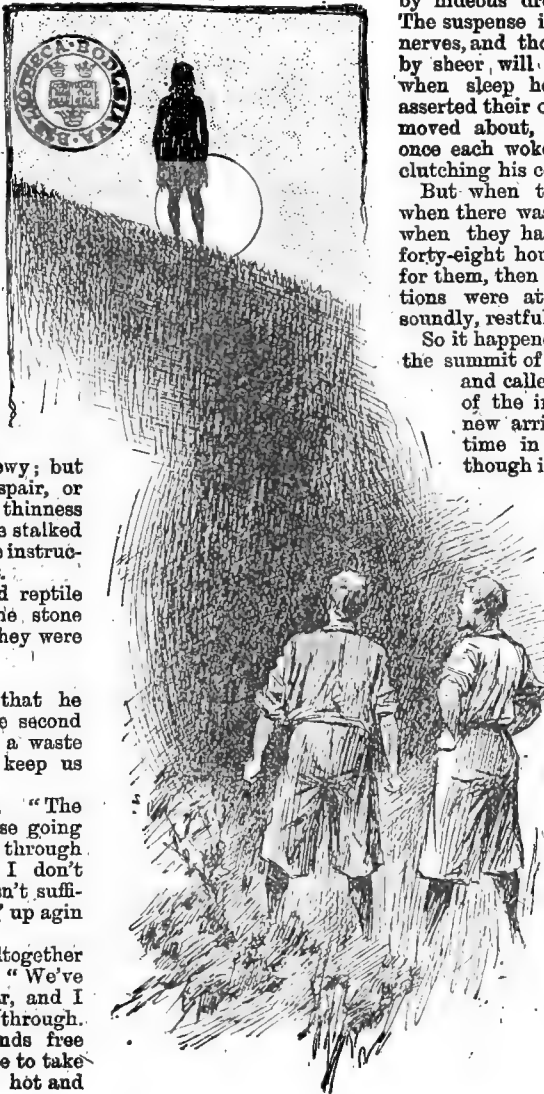
Sneyd was awake by this time, and had grasped the situation.

"Can you pull your ladder over, Norah, and lower it this side?" he asked.

"That's what I intended," she said; "but I've been trying, and I can't lift it. The thing's too heavy."

Sneyd gave a low whistle.

"I know I'm a fool not to have brought a rope as well,"



Norah was silhouetted black against the moonbeams.

Norah continued, with evident tears in her voice; "but I thought I could lift the ladder over. I made it in the woods, and brought it hene in two pieces, and then tied them together. Each half was heavy, but I could carry it. How silly of me not to see I should never be able to lift the two together."

Here she broke down completely, and O'Neill was fully employed in throwing up scraps of verbal comfort. Sneyd meanwhile bit his moustache perplexedly.

"Norah," he said at last, "could you make a rope?"

"Ach now," interrupted the Irishman; "don't bother the poor wee child any more. Don't yez see she's done her best an' av thers a slight mistake, 'tis cruel to throw it in her pretty teeth."

But Norah, quick to catch any hint that would help her lover out of his danger, caught at the words immediately.

"Yes, I can weave a rope as strong as you wish for; and then—yes, I see, I could lower down an end, and you could climb up. I will run away and commence at once. It will take some time, but this place is seldom visited by the Dajians, and likely enough they will never see me."

"Can't you get it finished before daylight?"

Norah was silhouetted black against the moonbeams which were streaming in from behind her. They saw her shake her pretty head.

"No," she said; "it would take a long time to plait. Besides, I must get the grass first. No, day would be well up before I could get it finished. But what does that matter? I came to save Murtagh. I am not afraid. The

little risk does not scare me. Don't fear, I shall bring your rope."

"Me darlint," exclaimed the Irishman; "Yez shall do nothing of the kind. You have run a million times more risks already than our paltry carcasses are worth. Besides, we have till the day after to-morrow, they said that this afternoon. So do you stay in the woods an' take your time over it; an' then when it's night, if you've got the rope made, and you're sure the coast's clear, why, then, it's plazed an' proud we'd be to see yez again."

"Good-bye, Murtagh dear."

"Good-bye, Norah ashore. Mind an' hide yer ladder. If any of the blayguards saw it, the sight might put them on yer thrack."

"All right. Good-bye, Sneyd."

"Good-bye, Norah, and take care of yourself."

Norah disappeared, and the Irishman turned to his companion.

"Isn't that girl a thrump? The queen of thrumps? Av any man was to say he could point out her aqual, I'd call him a liar, no matter who he was. But, man dear, my feelin's before was peaceful compared wid what they'll be now. 'Tis torture I shall be sufferin' so long as I'm alive, an' that sweet darlint's on this infernal island. Just fancy av one o' them devils was to catch sight of her."

O'Neill paused, trembling violently.

Sneyd put a hand on his shoulder.

"We must hope for the best. My presentiments have been right so far, haven't they? Well, I can assure you, I'm confident that it will come all right in the end."

(To be continued.)

A Dual Personality.

It was one of our Friday night symposiums at the Cosmos club, and as our particular clique was made up of Merton, from the geological survey, Herring of the Fishery Commission; together with Long, from the Agricultural Department; Forrest, of the medical staff and myself, then serving as correspondent for a Liverpool paper, it is needful to say that the talk had run the entire gamut of art, literature and science, and had for the moment settled on the belief in dual personalities.

"I tell you, gentlemen," said Merton, with the authoritative air by which he always attempted to settle questions under discussion, "that while I am willing to admit that there may be some things almost impossible to prove or disprove scientifically, yet this talk about dual personality, subconscious mind and all such stuff is nonsense."

And he lay back in his chair with a self-satisfied air, as though there was nothing more to be said on the subject.

Long took up the argument, and the debate grew rather warm.

Dr. Forrest had thus far taken no part in the discussion, but had smiled once or twice at our assertions in a way that assured us, who knew him so well, that he had a good story to tell if we could only draw him out.

"Come, doctor," said Long at last, "you ought to know something about this question, for you told us last week that you had studied under Charcourt when you were in Paris."

Forrest selected a fresh cigar from the box at his side, lighted it in his usual careful way and blew a few rings of smoke, which he watched float lazily to the ceiling, before he spoke.

"Well," he began, "as Merton has just said, there are some things which we cannot as yet decide by purely physical methods. We cannot weigh the soul in our most delicate balance, though the scale sinks if we add but the fraction of a hair, nor can we by our most subtle reagents analyse that vital spark we call life in our laboratories. I do not care to-night to speak of the many curious phenomena which I witnessed, during my studies in Paris, for they might furnish you with a clue to the story which is to follow; but I'll tell you a little incident in real life, which occurred when I was very young in my London practice, and then to leave the question for you to decide.

"When I established myself in the metrop'is fresh from my studies at Vienna, I joined the Bohemia club.

"We were a rather jolly lot at the Bohemia, for we worked hard at our different lines all day and then met at the club in the evenings for relaxation and to compare notes. You see we were young then and not authorities in our several branches, as you all are here," and he smiled in his quizzical way as he looked round our little circle.

"There were two men in the club," he continued, "both M. D.'s, and although greatly alike in their features and wonderfully so in their dress, they were totally different in character, and I suppose it would be hard to find in

any club two men further apart in their moral and mental qualities. Whiting had been a practising physician for a year or more and had already a large connection. He was a splendid fellow, large of frame but straight as an arrow, with great brown eyes that looked you squarely in the face when he spoke, and, with all his physical strength, kind and gentle as a woman. He was loved by every one at the club, where we knew him as the soul of honour and generous to a fault.

"Davis, on the other hand, he was enough like Whiting in features to be his twin brother, had a sneering expression on his face, and when he looked at you with his eyes half closed and that cynical smile on his lips he made me think of a snake.

"He was a heavy drinker, and spent money enough at the club, but he was never known to do a kind act, and we were sure that he never spent a shilling on anyone unless he saw that he would gain some advantage in return.

"Both of the men had ample means of their own, but Davis had never practised, so far as we knew. Where he lived no one seemed to know. Some said that he was an expert chemist and dabbled in alchemy as well, but he made no close friends, and seldom spoke of his own life.

"It happened that Davis and Whiting had never met at the club as each came but seldom, but we often chaffed one about the other, and from their facial resemblance dubbed them the two Dromios. Jekyll and Hyde would have been more appropriate, but this was long before Stevenson's book was written.

"Whiting always resented any chance allusion to his double, although good-natured at the rest of our chaff, and seemed to doubt the actual existence of Davis, whom he had heard of but never met, and thought we were simply trying to have a game with him. Naturally, the more he scoffed at the reality of Davis the more we nagged him, until finally in sheer desperation he proposed to give a quiet little dinner for four of us, at which Robinson, an artist and fellow club-member, myself, Davis and Whiting were to be the quartet.

"Davis promised to be there, if possible, and said he was already acquainted with Whiting—of course by reputation only, he added with that cynical smile we all hated. On the night of the dinner Robinson and I were there early, for we were anxious to see the meeting between Davis and Whiting, and had made several bets with the other fellows as to whether Davis would show up.

"Whiting appeared punctually as usual, but though we waited until midnight, Davis failed to materialise. Of course this settled the matter in Whiting's mind for the time being, and he made us set up several bottles of wine to drink the health of his mythical counterpart, as he called him.

"The next night, however, he came to the club, and, drawing Robinson and me aside, said: 'Look here, this matter has gone too far. I like a joke, but I think it is rather rough for you to keep it up.' And on our expressing our ignorance of his meaning, he showed us a letter from Davis, regretting his inability to be present the night before, and saying that he was too ill at the moment to express his regrets in person.

"But my dear fellow,' said Robinson, 'if you really think us guilty of this letter, will you kindly explain how it happens to be written on your own paper?'

"Whiting seized the note and seemed frightened for the moment, for at the head of the letter was his crest, and the envelope bore the impression of his private

seal, which he always wore on his watch-chain. He looked at it searchingly, and then left the club without a word.

"After this occurrence we ceased bantering him about Davis, and passed the word around to the other fellows to drop it, for we saw that the matter worried him greatly, and feared the effect of our chaff on his high-strung, nervous temperament. Davis came to the club less frequently during the winter, but at every mention of Whiting's name he smiled, and said he was very sorry they did not happen to meet.

"One day, early in the spring, Whiting sent a note asking me to come up to his den after dinner, as he had something of importance to tell, and begged me not to fail him. I had often been to his consulting rooms, but had never visited him at his rooms in Perth Street.

"The house was one of a row of old-fashioned buildings still in good repair, but backed up against their rear were several ramshackle old tenements, nearly deserted by tenants.

"I had not seen Whiting for some months and was shocked by the change in his appearance. There were dark circles under his eyes and a strange, hunted expression in his face. He grasped my hand eagerly and drew a chair for me in front of the fire, for the evenings were still cool.

"Doctor,' he exclaimed suddenly, after we had lit our cigars and talked glittering generalities for a few minutes, 'that fellow Davis is killing me by inches.'

"Why, old man,' I said, 'so you have come to believe in him at last.' I started to laugh, but checked myself when I saw the expression of his face.

"What is it, my dear boy?' I asked, soothingly. 'It certainly can't be so serious. What has he been up to now?'

"'Tis queer business,' said Whiting excitedly, 'and I can't imagine his motive; but these are the facts. For several weeks this fellow has dogged my footsteps, and after I have made a professional call and left the usual prescription he has sent a note to the patient imitating my handwriting and changing the medicines for others, which had they been taken as directed, would, in some cases, have proved fatal. Fortunately the chemists have sent word to me that there was some mistake and I have been able to correct it. But of course this constant changing of prescriptions has affected my practice terribly, and people are beginning to think that my mind is unbalanced.'

"But, my dear fellow,' said I, trying to quiet him, 'why not give up your practice for a few weeks and take a decided rest, and meanwhile we will deal with this fellow Davis as he deserves.'

"But that is not all,' continued Whiting, despairingly. 'It is true I don't need the income from my practice, and work more from the love of it than for fees, but he has gone still further and dared to call on Miss Wiley, my fiancée, and tell her many of the foolish escapades of my college days, the secret of which I thought was buried in my own breast. I have tried to explain them away, but, of course, cannot deny the tales, and I fear it is all over for me in that quarter. I can't see how she could listen to the cad or where she could have met him.'

"Davis's actions seemed to be more inexplicable than ever, and I longed to get hold of the brute and force an explanation from him; but, hiding my anger, I tried to quiet Whiting, and finally prevailed upon him to take a heavy dose of chloral, which I prepared,

and to try and get a night's rest, promising to see Miss Wiley shortly and attempt to patch up matters.

"I left him asleep on his lounge, and, as it was still early, determined to call on Miss Wiley, whom I knew slightly, and tell her of Whiting's condition.

"There was a light in the drawing room, and, ringing the bell, I gave my card to the servant, but he ushered me in unannounced. Miss Wiley sat at the piano, her hands on the keys, while standing at her side and looking down ardently into her upturned face was—Davis.

"For a moment I could not speak and seemed glued to the floor, but Davis quickly advanced and, after a few polite inquiries about my health and his dear friend Whiting, pleaded an engagement and left.

"His presence in the house and his unmistakable lover-like attitude made it very painful for me to speak, but remembering the condition of poor Whiting and how heartbroken he seemed, I ventured to speak about Davis and asked where she had met him.

"Oh, I have only known him a few weeks," she said. "He called with a letter of introduction from Dr. Whiting and said they had been fellow students. He has been most kind and attentive to me, and is teaching me some of his own songs." And she rattled on about his divine voice, while I sat speechless at the new complication of affairs.

"At last I blurted out. 'Would you kindly let me see the letter of introduction?' adding that Dr. Whiting had promised me letters to some of his friends and I wished to see his methods.

"I felt that this was a most feeble excuse, but could think of nothing else, and of course Miss Wiley was too polite to express her surprise at the strange request. Going to a dainty writing desk in the corner she came back and handed me the letter.

"There was no doubt of the chirography being exactly similar to Whiting's. I saw the same old-fashioned capitals and crisp, sharp endings of each word, and as for the signature, his bank would have sworn to it. Besides, there was his crest and seal which I now knew so well.

"I don't know what I said in thanking her, for my head was in a whirl, but I had enough sense to say good-night and quickly withdrew.

"How Davis could have obtained the paper and seal, or how he learnt of all those college scrapes of Whiting's I could not imagine. But I saw that his relations with Miss Wiley had gone so far that it would do no good for me to interfere, and that I should only be snubbed by her for my impertinence in meddling in other people's business.

"Whiting was out when I called at his rooms next morning, and his servant told me that he had gone to the country for a rest and left no address.

"It was perhaps a month afterwards that he turned up at the club one night, looking more ghastly than ever. He would not say where he had been, and positively declined to discuss the Davis matter.

"I know he talked widely about hypnotic control and kindred subjects until we thought his mind was affected, and tried to calm him, but he grew more and more excited, until, finally, I saw him turn pale and clutch the back of a chair, and noticed a little stream of frothy

blood oozing from between his clenched teeth as he staggered out of the room.

"I jumped up from the sofa and followed as quickly as I could, but when I reached the front door he was gone, and I met Davis just coming in.

"He walked leisurely into the café and leant against the mantelpiece. To my excited enquiries about Whiting he simply smiled and said he had not noticed him going out, but I saw him scratching a small red spot from his cuff with his finger nail and felt sure they must have met.

"Gentlemen," said Davis, in his drawing voice, "I beg you will congratulate me on my approaching marriage, and pardon my not mentioning the lady's name in the club. Waiter, please take the orders."

"Most of us refused to drink with him, for we despised the man, and I left him chatting with a few of his particular cronies and went up to Whiting's room. I heard that Davis left very shortly after I did.

"Whiting had not come home and I spent the night hunting through hotels, police stations and hospital, for I felt sure he had ruptured a bloodvessel in his lungs, which must quickly prove fatal.

"But I could find no trace of him, and finally, utterly worn out, went to my rooms to toss about until mid-day with a horrible nightmare, in which Whiting and Davis were struggling in one another's grasp, each striving to kill the other.

"At lunch I picked up a morning paper and scanned the society news listlessly until my eyes lit upon 'the rumoured engagement of Dr. J. H. Davis of — and Miss Isabelle Wiley, the well-known belle, etc.'

"I sat musing over the strange vicissitudes of fate and wondering what had become of poor Whiting. Suddenly a news-boy rushed into the restaurant calling extras, and the first headline I saw was:

"Sudden death of Dr. Davis."

"I eagerly read the usual detailed account of how he had been found that morning dead in his bed, evidently, the paper stated, from a ruptured blood vessel, as the bed clothing and carpets were stained with blood, but no wound was found on his body.

"Strangely enough, he lived in one of the old tenements at the back of Whiting's home, and measurements which I made subsequently showed that his rooms and Whiting's must have been on similar floors and directly back to back.

"Remembering the stolen notepaper I tried to find some entrance between the two houses, but the walls were solid, and even the wall papers showed naught but the few little cracks due to their many years' service.

"This, gentlemen," said Dr. Forrest, draining his glass and taking up his hat and cane from the sofa, "is a story of actual life, and if any of you have an explanation to offer I should be happy to hear it."

We could say nothing for a moment, and then the irrepressible Merton found his tongue.

"But how about Dr. Whiting?" he asked.

"As for him, gentlemen," said Dr. Forrest, solemnly, as he stood by the open door, "I know nothing further except that he was never found. But I have my theory. Good night!"

And he closed the door.

A. W. WORTH.



HESTER'S LOVE.

WHEN pretty Hester Warren married Ezra Banks, who was twenty years older than she, and a shy, silent man out of touch with village life, everybody said that she

made a mistake that she would soon regret. Yet, though village eyes kept keenest watch upon them, village prophecy was for once at fault. Hester's girlish beauty changed into comfortable, middle-aged comeliness, and Ezra grew stiff and rheumatic, yet their devotion to each other was unchanged; indeed, after Nannie, their only child, married and left home, it seemed as if the pages of life had blown back for them and they were once more lovers, and the world was for them alone.

That was before Ezra had typhoid fever. Through his long illness his wife nursed him tenderly, but he came from it, a broken-down old man, with his ears forever sealed to all the common sounds to which his life had been set. He was slow in realising this, but one day as he lay watching his wife and the doctor, the knowledge broke harshly upon him. He could see his wife's lips move as she smoothed the bed with her soft, wrinkled hand, but he could hear no word. Then he turned his dull eyes, with a pitiful look of pain darkening them, toward the doctor. He too, was speaking, but the deaf ears could catch no sound. His weak, peevish voice jarred suddenly upon their talk.

"Why don't ye speak so's I can hear ye, stid o' mumbling so?"

His wife started and then cast a quick, imploring glance at the doctor. She leaned down over the bed her face was in the shadow and her husband could not see her eyes.

"Do you hear me now, dear?"

The words reached him faintly, and from a distance. He struggled with the sounds a minute or two before they resolved themselves into words.

"Of course I hear ye," he said fretfully, "only why don't you speak up? I ain't so sick, be I?"

The words were a little clearer now, though still far off.

"You have been very ill. It has to be quiet for you you know, dear, but you will soon be up now."

The old man shut his eyes wearily; the effort had been

a heavy one for him. His wife turned to the doctor, her eyes shining through her tears.

"I can make him hear," she cried; "I knew I could. I didn't believe Ezra could get where he couldn't hear me. And he needn't ever know now."

The doctor looked at her and said nothing. He was a young man, and it seemed very pitiful to him.

But he had not understood the old man's strong constitution. In a few weeks he was about again, as well as ever, apparently, save for the sealed ears. His wife chattered to him in her old fashion, and kept out of sight the medicines she took for her strained voice; she cautioned the neighbours who came to see him, and thought that he did not know. But she was mistaken; there were other sounds—many of them—that had been woven into a life of nearly seventy years, and in place of these there was a great vacant stillness; and he knew all.

One afternoon she found him sitting in the big wooded chair in the kitchen, studying his old twisted hands. He gave her a tremulous smile as she came in.

"I'm most broken up, Hester," he said.

"Don't!" she cried. "don't Ezra!—I can't bear it! We're both getting older, but that's all 'tis."

He shook his head sadly.

"No, 'tain't, Hester—I've been a-seeing it for a long time. You're young yet—you can see and hear just as you uster, but I—I'm an old man, Hester. You've been a good girl, and we've had a happy life together, but I didn't calculate for you to be tied up to an old man. I've got to thinking about it lately, and sometimes I think folks was right and it hadn't orter been."

The woman listened and a great pain seemed to beat up in her throat and choke her voice. She leaned over and put her trembling hands on his.

"Ezra," she cried, and the appeal in her voice carried it with clear distinctness to him, "Ezra, have I ever said or done a thing to make you feel so?"

He looked up, startled.

"Heaven knows you haven't Hester," he said earnestly.

"And, Ezra, if anything should happen to me—if I should be sick or helpless, would you love me less? Would you?"

A change came over the old man; it seemed for an instant that the face of his youth looked back at her.

"If it wasn't for your suffering, Hester, I wish you could see," he said almost passionately.

He rose stiffly, and stood with his arm about her, looking down the road. It was toward nightfall, and the valley was full of shadows, while above the hills floated soft grey clouds—the dead sunset. And even as they looked a sudden thrill and flush came across these, and the valley was filled with the glory of the after-glow, and the two old figures stood silent in the midst of the golden light.

It was a few weeks after this that Hester caught a severe cold. She was in bed for several days, and Nannie had her husband and child to care for, and her mother would not let her stay long.

"They'll be needing you—I can get along now," she said.

"I expect they can get along without me a little while longer," answered Nannie.

"What do you say?"

Nannie looked alarmed; she raised her voice and spoke with careful emphasis:

"I expect—they can get along—without me a little while," she repeated.

Her mother nodded.

"I said it had been quite a while," she said. "I'm glad you're going, Nannie, though we shall miss you so."

Nannie's face filled with a pitiful tenderness.

Her mother looked up suddenly and noticed, and a strange expression came into her eyes. She spoke with curious eagerness.

"Nannie," she said, "tell me true, don't I hear as I used to?"

Nannie's face flushed. With a sudden impulsive gesture she threw her arms about her mother, sobbing bitterly. But in her mother's eyes the strange expression grew into a glad light.

"Don't feel so, Nannie," she said. "I—I'm almost glad I'm going to tell your father."

Nannie went home the next day sorely against her will. She told her husband that it almost broke her heart to think of them so; if it wasn't for little Nannie she would go back there and stay, but she couldn't take the child—it might hurt her throat seriously to have to shout to them. Then she caught Nannie up and kissed her again and again; she wondered how she could live if she couldn't hear that baby voice. She was troubled too, for the child had a delicate throat and she dared not take her often to see the old folks—and they would miss her so!

But it was not so hard; her mother spoke of it herself, and said that she and father had talked it over, and they knew it would be best not to have the child there often. And Nannie mustn't worry—they could get along all right as long as they could hear each other. Indeed, it seemed as if the bond of suffering drew them closer together. It was beautiful to see the old man's care for his wife, and the tenderness in speaking to her. The neighbours who had pitied at first talked often of it; they said they never saw two deaf people take such comfort in each other. Often on summer days the two high-pitched voices would be heard, and the people passing would smile at each other, and sometimes linger a little.

So the winter passed and the summer, and then quite suddenly, one night when the earth was lying hushed and silent under a soft fall of snow, the old man passed from the silence of his life into the silence that is beyond the reach of human voice.

The neighbours for miles around came to the funeral and the house was full of grave decorous whispers, broken strangely when any one spoke to the wife. She was pale and silent; only once did she speak of anything that she wanted done, and then she called Nannie hesitatingly.

"Tell him I don't want him to speak so's I can hear. It—it wouldn't seem proper, somehow. It won't make any difference to Ezra now,"—she faltered a moment, and a tender light came into the faded blue eyes—"he can't say anything about my husband that I don't know a hundred times better than him."

"I'll tell him, mother," said Nannie, gently.

Her mother spoke slowly, choosing her words. "And tell him," she said, "that we've lived together thirty years, and it don't seem more than thirty weeks as I look back. And tell him that in it all was never an angry word, never anything but a love I can speak of; and tell him" (she was crying a little now, but her face was still touched with the wonderful light) "tell him that the only thing I'm sorry for now is that there wasn't more I could do to show my love for my husband."

"I will tell him all," said Nannie.

That was a strange funeral—the neighbours spoke of it afterwards. The still figure that sat dead to the words of tender healing spoken by the minister seemed to lend an element of mystery to the scene, and the contrast between the darkened room and the brilliant, sparkling world outside flashed upon their eyes like a miracle.

When the old man was laid to his last rest, the lonely widow quietly turned away from the grave, and was assisted into the carriage of her daughter and son-in-law and driven to their home. She was so quiet that her daughter did not disturb her.

"I don't feel as if I knew what to say to her, though she is my mother," she whispered to her husband.

They helped her tenderly into the house and Nannie put her into the easiest chair. From the next room a baby voice broke in upon them.

"Mamma, can I see dran'ma? Nannie wants to see dran'ma!"

"Let me have Nannie, please—it's so long since I have!"

Nannie stopped at the door, a great wonder in her eyes.

"Why, mother!" she exclaimed.

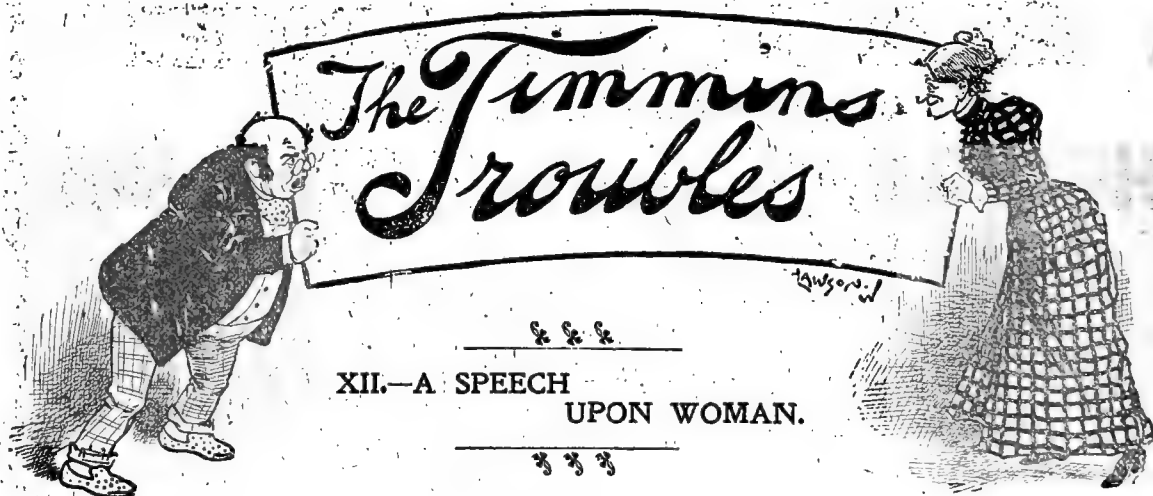
Her mother looked up at her with a tremulous smile.

"Yes, I know. I meant to tell you before, but I couldn't somehow and I've heard all the time. I was only deaf a day or two from cold. I thought I really was at first, and then I kept it up, because it comforted—him—somehow. He'd felt he was old and breaking down, you know, but when I did, too, he felt better and cheered right up. There was only one thing—I did want the baby so! And it seemed as if 'twould break my heart when she did come not to answer her and to have her strain her little voice to make me hear!"

"And you kept it up all these months!" said Nannie in hushed tone.

Her mother looked up; she was holding little Nannie with eager, trembling hands, and it almost seemed as if the golden baby head reflected a wonderful light upon her tired face.

"When you've loved a man more than thirty years, that isn't much to do," she replied.



XII.—A SPEECH UPON WOMAN.

"Now, my dear," said Mr. Timmins, as he drew writing materials towards him, "now I want your woman's wit. These fellows insist that I must respond to the toast 'Woman,' to-morrow night, and I must prepare a few remarks. If we both set at it, we'll get up something nice."

"What you want," argued Mrs. Timmins, entering into the spirit of the undertaking, and tapping her teeth with her thimble, "what you want is woman in her various phases."

"What I want is a speech," retorted Mr. Timmins. "They haven't put me down for a panorama. I want a short address, full of good points and pleasant things about the ladies. Now I shall begin. 'Fellow citizens

"But women are not fellow citizens, you know. I should say—"

"You'd say, 'Fellow back-hair,' that's what you would say. I'm addressing the people, and they're all men; don't you see? I've got to commence somewhere, and then I go on. 'Now, fellow citizens, regarding women, our origin, our companions, our posterity, our mothers, our wives, our daughters, what more can we say than that they give us life, make it happy, and soothe its decline?' How's that?"

"Is that the same woman?" asked Mrs. Timmins, bending over the table. "It doesn't strike me that she would care to have it put in that way. Why not say, 'Fellow-citizens, we are assembled—'"

"What's the matter with you?" demanded Mr. Timmins. "I've got to open with a sentiment, and you can't find anything more graceful than that. Then I will go on: 'She rises in the cradle, reaches her meridian at the altar, and goes down in a flood of dew at the grave.' Can you grasp that?"

"I don't like that as well as the other," remonstrated Mrs. Timmins. "You make her a mother while she's a baby, and as for the grave part, you don't stop to think that she may be another meridian by getting married again. I would say something like this, 'Fellow-citizens, we are assembled—'"

"No, I won't either. Who's going to get married again? Can't you see that I'm only carrying out the first idea of origin, companionship, and posterity? Sup-

pose I say next, 'We revere her as a mother, adore her as a wife, and—and—what do we do for her as a daughter?'"

"Well, you might say, we dress her, we educate her, and keep an eye on her, and—and—and—"

"Spank her! Why don't you spank her?" howled Mr. Timmins. "Can't you think of something practical? I've got that we revere our mothers and adore our wives, and I want something for the daughter. Can't you originate something?"

"We provide a home for her. Wouldn't—?"

"Yes, of course!" raved Mr. Timmins. "That's the ideal! That settles it! All you want now is two prolonged laughs, four continued applauses, one enthusiasm, and 'a voice,' to be an oration! 'Fellow-citizens, we furnish her with poached eggs and beans! Fellow-citizens, we revere her as a mother, we adore her as a wife, and as a daughter, we change her sheets once a week! Fellow-citizens, we pass her the gravy!'"

"Fellow-citizens!" yelled Mr. Timmins, gesticulating like a horse chestnut tree, "Fellow-citizens, if she wants her beef underdone, we give it to her. Fellow-citizens, we give her all the butter she can paste on her bread!" Is that what you want me to say? Have you got any more suggestions? Do you know any more eloquence?" And the worthy gentleman leant back in his chair speechless.

"Couldn't you leave her out altogether?" recommended Mrs. Timmins. "Can't you just revere her as a mother and adore her as a wife? As for the daughter, you might pass it over with saying: 'Fellow-citizens, we are assembled—'"

"Yes, or I can cut her throat," exclaimed Mr. Timmins. "I can take her to the pound! I can salt her down for winter use! Hang the speech!" and Mr. Timmins danced on the fragments of his notes, and banged himself out of the room.

"Well," thought Mrs. Timmins, as she took down her hair and put it up again, "I don't see why he couldn't say: 'Fellow-citizens, we are assembled here to say something poetical about woman, and the best I can say is, we don't always show her when we love her, and we love her when we don't always show it.' That's sensible, and it's so," sighed Mrs. Timmins.

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR.

KAPUTINE

SAFE REMEDY CURES

HEADACHE and NEURALGIA IMMEDIATELY.

And is sold by all leading Chemists in Packets of 18 Doses, 1s.

To ANYONE HAVING THE LEAST DIFFICULTY, it will be sent post free for 12 Stamps by "KAPUTINE Ltd.," Huddersfield; or, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, A. M. Kaputine, Huddersfield, you will receive a supply of free sample.

The fact that "KAPUTINE" is recommended by many leading Medical Men, and is used in National Hospitals and Infirmaries proves that it is THE, THE recognised
SAFE REMEDY FOR HEADACHES.

Refuse Substitutes and demand "KAPUTINE," the Safe Remedy. There is no substitute "LIKE IT"; nothing "AS GOOD"; nothing "SIMILAR."

KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR. KSR.



The Lustre Lasts!
Pyn-Ka Leaves no Scratches!

Cleans and burnishes gold, silver, plate, copper, brass, nickel, tin, glass, etc., better, quicker, and at less cost of labour and money than any other polish known.

Paste or tablets, 1d. to 6d. All dealers.

**PAMPHLET
AND ADVICE
POST
FREE.**

Every man and woman in search of **HEALTH** should write without delay to The Medical Battery Co., for their

NEW MEDICAL WORK

which will be sent Post Free to any address. The treatise contains particulars of the treatment of the various ills that flesh is heir to. It also contains a selection from the thousands of testimonials received in favour of the **Electropathic Belt** and other curative appliances. Advice Free of charge (personally or by letter.)

Medical Battery Co., Limited,
489, OXFORD ST., London, W.

NOSE

NOSE **MACHINES** as worn by Nobility. Shape altered permanently by few weeks' wear, from 9/9 each. Red Nose Cure, Medically Approved, 3/9. Pamphlet, "Cause and Prevention," 1/-; particulars for stamp. Mention Paper.

LEES RAY, Specialist, South Castle St., Liverpool.

A SUM of from 12s. to 25s. per week can be earned in spare hours or evenings by either sex everywhere.—Send addressed envelope for particulars to Box 24, Eclipse Works, 92a Aldersgate Street, London.

TOOTH-ACHE

CURED INSTANTLY BY
BUNTER'S Prevents Decay, Saves
Extraction, Sleepless Nights
Prevented.

Neuralgic Headaches and all Nerve Pains removed by BUNTER'S NERVINE. All Chemists, 1s. 1½d.

SILVER QUEEN CYCLES



ON MONTHLY PAYMENTS.
Immense stock Ladies' and Gents'. New and Secondhand. Wonderful bargains. Carriage paid. Easy payments from 10s. monthly, or large cash discount. 1 year's guarantee. Lists post free on application.
—THE SILVER QUEEN
Aldershot Court Road, London.

ATLAS LOCKSTITCH MACHINE.



THE ATLAS SEWING MACHINE CO.,
188b High St., Camden Town, London, N.W.;
63 Seven Sisters Rd., N.; 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

Don't Cough-use

They at once check the Cough
and remove the cause.

The Unrivalled

One Lozenge alone relieves.
Sold everywhere, Tins 13^d. each.

Keatings Lozenges

PIANOS. UPRIGHT IRON
GRAND.

Complete Iron frame, Brass Pin Plate, Nickel-bolted
Wrest Plank, Check Action, Full Trichord, Full Compass,
Riveted Hammers, Handsome Walnut Case, Inlaid Mar-
queterie Panel, Sconces, Trusses, etc. Tone and touch
perfect. Guaranteed 25 years. 28 guineas, at 10/6 per
month. Delivered free on payment of 10/6. Approval.
Catalogues Free.

ORGANS. GENUINE AMERICAN.

Imported Direct. Solid Walnut Case, Mirror Top, Musto Case, 2 Knee Swells, Mouse and Dust Proof, 8 Stops, 3 Sets of Reeds, 14 Guineas, at 8/- per month. 10 Stops, 3 Sets of Reeds, 2 Octave Couplers. 15 guineas, at 7/- per month. Illustrated Lists Free. Kindly mention this paper.

THE LONDON AND LIVERPOOL PIANOFORTE CO.,
Granby St. & Selborne St., LIVERPOOL.

"Burning a Penny Candle to Look for a Farthing."

That is what some folks do when they try to save pence in the purchase of low-priced adulterated soap. They not only "burn the candle" but they "lose the farthing" as well, when they subject costly fabric to the corrosive action of such soaps. Pounds are literally thrown away in washing fabrics like lace, muslin, damask, cretonnes, silks, and cambrics with common soap.



is expressly manufactured for the washing of such dainty articles. It is made from the purest and sweetest of vegetable oils and fats. White goods become whiter and coloured goods brighter when washed with it, whilst its absolute purity makes it an ideal soap for the bath and toilet.

A Purer Soap is beyond the Art of Soapmaking.

A MAGNIFICENT COMPLEXION ASSURED

By the Free Use of Lillie Powder.

Whatever is the matter with your skin LILLIE POWDER will soon put it all right again. LILLIE POWDER is a sure cure for Red Faces, Blotches, and indeed all ailments of the Skin. If you try it once you will be more than satisfied. If you go to a chemist or elsewhere for it, be sure that it bears this label, beautifully printed in red and black upon a delicate pink paper. Firmly refuse substitutes, as they may be injurious. ■

SEND FOR IT AT ONCE—NOW or To-morrow.

This is what other people say.

TESTIMONIALS.

Used for Many Years.—"The Lillie Powder is prepared from my original recipe. I have used it for many years, and recommend it as being most beneficial to the complexion."—**Lillie Langtry.**

The Very Best.—"I think your new Lillie Powder quite the very best, and you may be pleased to know I have used it ever since I first went on the stage."—**Ellaline Terriss.**

Most Exquisite.—"I think your new Lillie Powder most exquisite."—**Adelina Patti.**

Unrivalled for the Skin.—"I guarantee that the Lillie Powder is prepared according to Mrs. Langtry's recipe, and that as a preparation for the skin it is unrivalled, owing to its medicinal qualities."—**William Clarkson.**

THREE TINTS—White, Flesh-colour, and Cream.

Can be ordered of all the best Chemists and Hairdressers.

PRICE ONE SHILLING. BY POST, 1s. 2d.

THE LILLIE SYNDICATE (P. DEPT.), 3 HENRIETTA STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.



Digitized by Google

IN THESE DAYS OF HIGH PRESSURE

when the incessant grind, necessary for a decent existence, is severe enough to knock vital sparks out of the constitutions of the best of us, who shall deny that they are wise in their generation who, without waiting for a danger signal, appeal periodically to some proved medicine which can be implicitly trusted to cleanse and renovate the marvellous mechanism of the human system? At no time since the days of Adam have breadwinners, whether man or woman, stood in such pressing need as they do nowadays of a sure, convenient, and, at the same time, perfectly harmless antidote against brain fag, irritability, and drooping spirits. Well, to balance the bitters, you will generally, even in this hard world, find the genuine sweets somewhere, and undoubtedly it is just here where



BEECHAM'S PILLS

come cheerfully, and cheaply, to the rescue. A remedy always pleasantly speedy—for we have no time to rest by the way—certain in its curative powers, safe and gentle in its action, and permanent in its results, is it any wonder that Beecham's Pills have found, and are ever finding, their way into the waistcoat pocket of every wise man and into the cupboard of every thoughtful woman—maid or matron? Beecham's Pills have long been prized for their distinct virtue of pleasingly appealing to the brain *via* the stomach, and by dispersing all "cobwebs," at once fitting us to face the struggle of modern life. Vast numbers owe their good health to Beecham's Pills—nay, more, we repeat the old, bold, but honest statement that Beecham's Pills save thousands of lives yearly. Therefore, we consider the forcible assertion that first caught your eye on this page to be the truth—viz., that "in these days of high pressure" Beecham's Pills

ARE AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY.

Worth a Guinea a Box.

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS and NERVOUS DISORDERS,

Sick Headache, Constipation,

Weak Stomach, Impaired Digestion,

Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.



The Sale now **EXCEEDS SIX MILLION BOXES per Annum.**

Prepared only by the Proprietor, **THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.**

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere, in Boxes, **1/1 1/2** and **2/9** each. Full Directions with each Box.